●現代麻雀コミックス●

福本伸行

FUKUMOTO NOBUYUKI 6

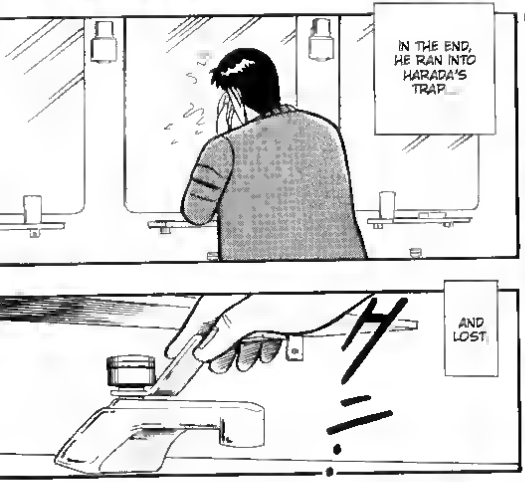
天

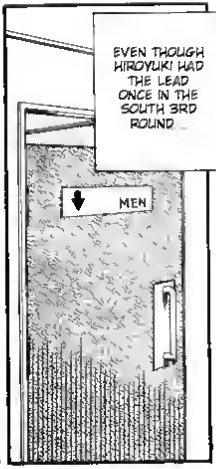
TEN

竹書房

TAKE SHOBO

COMEBACK VICTORY
HARADA TOOK THE SECOND MATCH AT TABLE "B" IN THE EAST-WEST BATTLE


IN THE END, HE RAN INTO HARADA'S TRAP...
AND LOST.

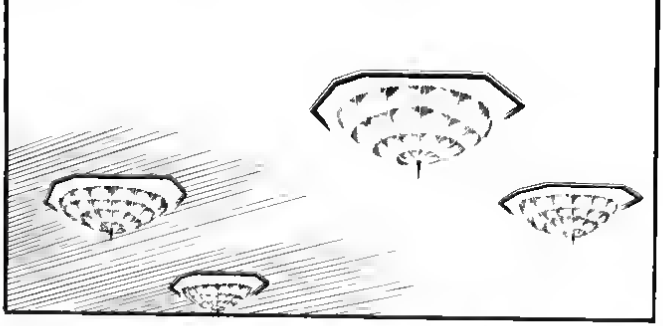

EVEN THOUGH HIROYUKI HAD THE LEAD ONCE IN THE SOUTH 3RD ROUND...
MEN

Young Men's Contemporary
CAMPUS
Sportswear/Activewear
CHAPTER 48
RETURN

I'M SUCH A FAILURE...
A FATAL HABIT LIKE THAT...!
OF COURSE HARADA WOULDN'T HAVE THAT...!
WHAT THE HELL WAS I THINKING?
ANYWAY... THERE'S TOO MUCH OF A DIFFERENCE IN SKILL BETWEEN ME AND THE REST OF THE PEOPLE HERE...
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M EVER GOING TO WIN...
SO FAR, NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY...
I'M JUST HOLDING BACK EAST WITH MY MESSING AROUND...

I GOTTA SAY
THE FACT THAT YOU HAVEN'T DONE WELL
SO FAR
...TEN

COME ON!
HUH?
ISN'T BECAUSE YOU'RE TECHNICALLY ANY WORSE THAN ANYONE ELSE HERE
IT MIGHT MAKE IT CLEAR!
IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT YOU'RE MISSING?
WHEN YOU WATCH THOSE TWO...
THE BATTLE BETWEEN AKAGI AND SOGA AT TABLE "A" IS IN THE FINAL ROUNDS
CAMPUS



I KNEW I COULD COUNT ON YOU, SOGA.
YOU'RE SET TO FOLLOW ME ON UP...!

SO, MY BOYS TELL ME THAT AFTER THE SOUTH 2ND ROUND THERE'S 6200 POINTS BETWEEN YOU AND AKAGI...?
YEAH...

IF YOU WIN HERE, COMBINED WITH MY VICTORY, THAT MAKES FOUR PEOPLE FOR WEST.

IT'S OKAY TO USE A BIT OF FORCE!

YOU CAN TAKE THIS HAN-CHAN...!
AFTER GETTING THIS FAR

AND WHEN AKAGI LOSES...
IT'S POSSIBLE THEIR TEAM WILL BE ON SHAKY FOOTING AND START TO SHAKE.
EAST WILL BE GETTING IMPATIENT.
AS LONG AS WE GET IT DOWN TO FOUR OF THOSE, QUICKLY...
THERE ARE EIGHT SEATS FOR THE SHOWDOWN.
THIS HAN-CHAN IS A PIVOTAL STEP IN THE OPENING STAGES OF THIS BATTLE.
SURE DO WHATEVER YOU NEED TO DO
I COULD EVEN USE THE "RETURN"?
IN THAT CASE...
CRUSH HIM! NO MATTER WHAT IT TAKES.

ざわ。。。
THE MATCH RESUMES...!
AKAGI VS. SOGA
ざわ。。
IT'S POSSIBLE TO MAKE A COMEBACK IN ONE ROUND BUT——
THE DIFFERENCE IS ONLY 6200 POINTS
SOGA'S HAND
CLOSED KAN
6TH TURN
WITH AKAGI AS HIS OPPONENT IS THE QUESTION.
WHETHER OR NOT IT WILL GO AS PLANNED
KAN...
2ND MATCH OF THE QUALIFYING ROUNDS, SOUTH 3RD ROUND

CLOSED KAN
AND DISCARD THE 2-MAN.....?
KEEP IT TO GO FOR SAN-SHOKU HERE
.....
HUH...?
WHY...?

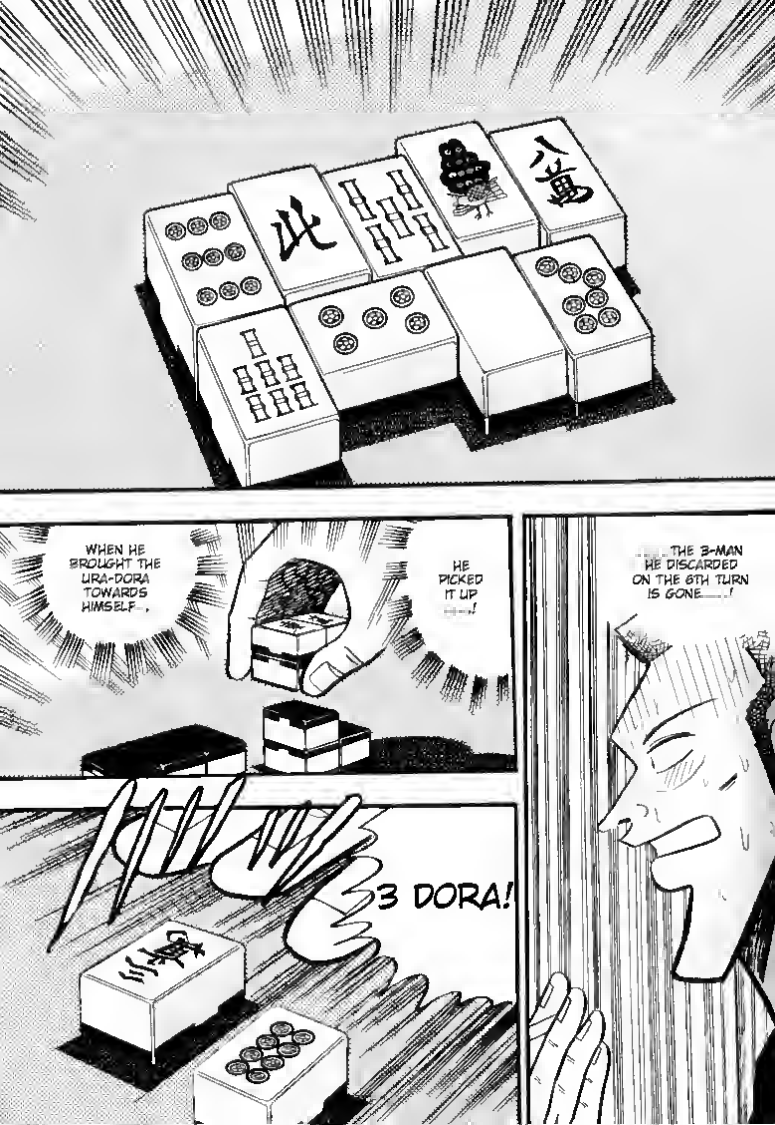
THIS WAS SOGA'S GENIUS.
AT A GLANCE, IT SEEMED LIKE A BAD HAND BUT...
IF YOU'RE GOING TO GIVE IT A YAKU, SAN-SHOKU'S THE ONLY ONE TO GO FOR...
EVEN THOUGH THE CLOSED KAN GIVES THE HAND HIGH FU POINTS, IT'S STILL A GARBAGE HAND.
WHAT'S HE THINKING.....?
NEXT TURN, IN TENPAI
THIS B-MAN WOULD COME BACK TO LIFE LATER...!
AND THEN, 3 TURNS LATER
HE WENT FOR RIICHI RIGHT AWAY.
RIICHI!

ONLY RIICHI AND MENZEN TSUMO...
TSUMO!
A WIN IS A WIN, BUT
THIS IS...
IT WON'T GET TO AKAGI...
60 FU 2 HAN, FOR 3900...

OR.....
THAT WHEN HE'S AFTER A COMEBACK, HE'D FINISH A CRITICAL ROUND WITH AN ORDINARY HAND LIKE THIS...
IT'S UNTHINKABLE...
.....
IS THAT HE WASN'T AFTER THE REGULAR DORA FROM THE START...!
ALL I CAN THINK OF...
HAS HE PREDICTED WHAT THE URA-DORA WILL BE...?

發
SOGA PROBABLY HAD A FEELING ABOUT THE URA-DORA, AND RAN WITH IT -
THAT THIS WOULD PROBABLY BE A MEDIOCRE HAND BUT.....
.....
IT'S NO GOOD...!
UN-
EXPECT-
EDLY

發
三萬
HUH...?
THERE SHOULD BE TWO TILES FOR THE URA-DORA BUT THERE'S...
...THREE ...!?


WHEN HE BROUGHT THE URA-DORA TOWARDS HIMSELF...
HE PICKED IT UP.....!
3 DORA!
THE 3-MAN HE DISCARDED ON THE 6TH TURN IS GONE.....!

AND THEN
URGH ....
WHILE EVERYONE'S ATTENTION WAS ON THE URA-DORA
THE DORA INDICATOR THAT WAS IN HIS LEFT HAND
WENT INTO THE LEFT END OF HIS OWN DISCARDS

A COMEBACK WIN...!
RIICHI, TSUMO, 3 DORA.
URA-DORA
HEH HEH HEH ...
.....

ざわ…
ざわ
SURE DO WHATEVER YOU NEED TO DO
THEN I COULD EVEN USE THE "RETURN"?
THE "RETURN" …
THAT'S WHAT THAT WAS ABOUT ……

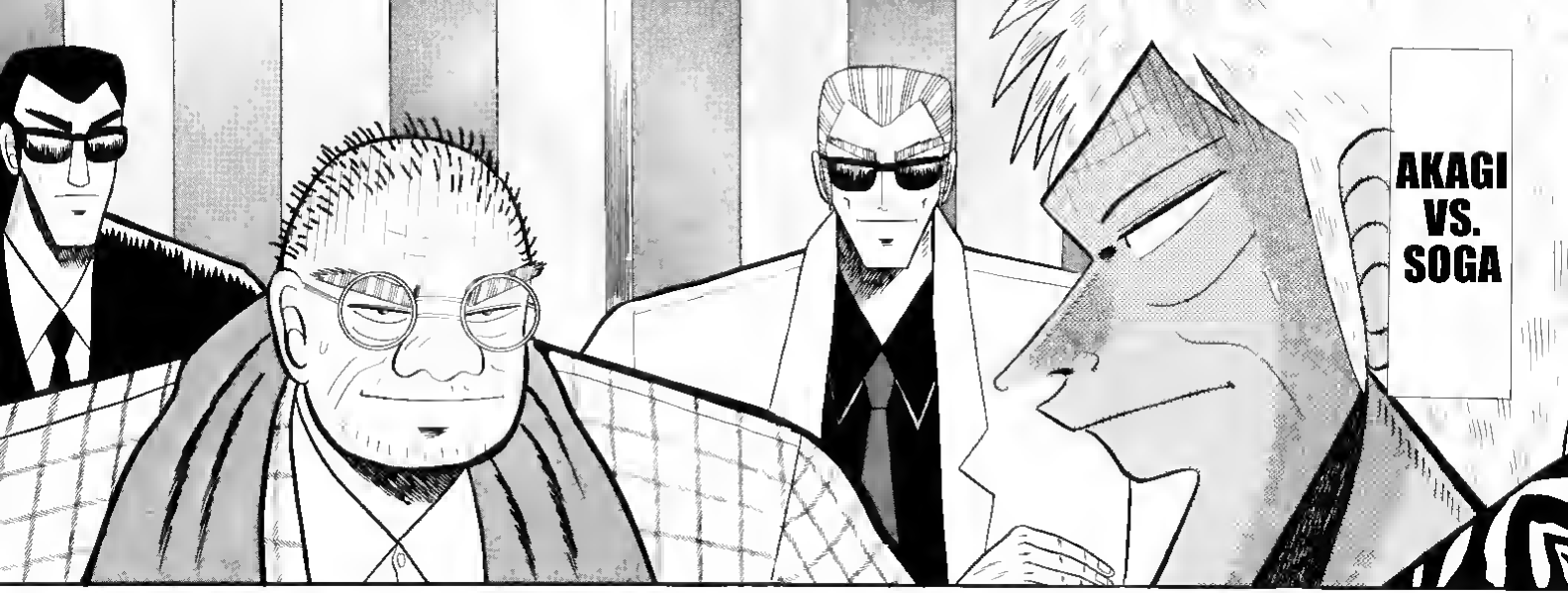
THAT WAS THE KEY TO HIS TRICK
I HAD A STRANGE FEELING ABOUT IT WHEN HE DISCARDED THE 3-MAN ON THE 6TH TURN BUT...!
HE CHOSE A SUREFIRE 3 URA-DORA TO WIN WITH...!
RATHER THAN AN UNCERTAIN SAN-SHOKU
AND THEN THE 3-MAN THAT WAS ONCE DEAD RETURNS TO LIFE FOR THE DORA...!
AS LONG AS HE HAS THAT HE'S GOT A TRICK WITH UNRIVALLED DESTRUCTIVE POWER...
HE DOESN'T NEED COMPLICATED TRICKS OR TACTICS...!
SIMPLE AND CLEAR-CUT...!

THE
DEAD-TILE
DORA
RETURN
.....!

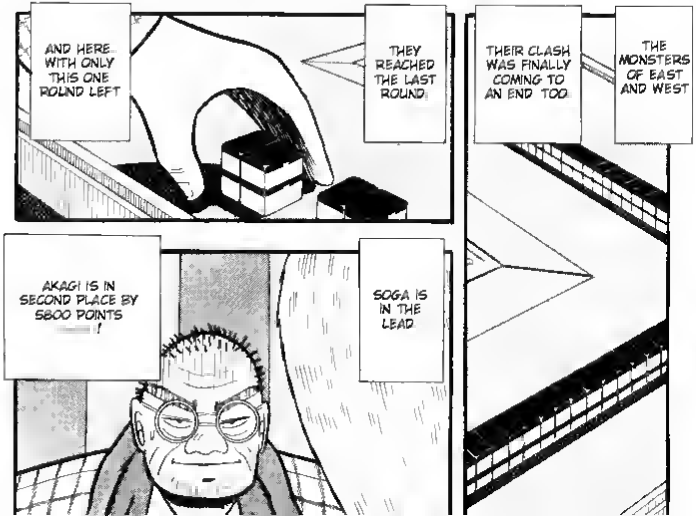
ざわ
ざわ
THAT'S RIGHT...
I'M SURE SOGA PICKED IT OUT OF THE DISCARD PILE
THE 3-MAN FROM THE 6TH TURN IS GONE
I KNOW SOGA DID SOMETHING JUST NOW
BUT...
THIS'LL BE SOMETHING TO SEE...
HEH HEH...
NO...
DID YOU SEE THAT...?
I DIDN'T NOTICE A THING...
HIS MOVEMENTS WERE FLUID

AKAGI'S NOT GOING TO TAKE THAT LYING DOWN...!
WHEN SOMEONE MAKES A FOOL OF HIM LIKE THAT
HE'S BEEN PLAYING ALONG WITHOUT CHEATING...
AKAGI'S BEEN HOLDING BACK HIS ULTIMATE UNDERHANDED TECHNIQUES IN THE EAST-WEST BATTLES
BUT...
?

CHAPTER 49
DISGUISE


AKAGI VS. SOGA

THIS LAST ROUND HAS TURNED INTO A SPEED MATCH!
AS LONG AS HE WINS, ANY NUMBER OF POINTS WILL DO.
SOGA'S FINE WITH 1000 POINTS.
HE'LL BE FAST.....!


AND HERE WITH ONLY THIS ONE ROUND LEFT
THEY REACHED THE LAST ROUND.
THEIR CLASH WAS FINALLY COMING TO AN END TOO.
THE MONSTERS OF EAST AND WEST
AKAGI IS IN SECOND PLACE BY 5800 POINTS!
SOGA IS IN THE LEAD

THIS GAME WILL BE OVER WITHIN SIX TURNS ...!
SHOULD BE WELL AWARE OF THIS TOO.
AKAGI...

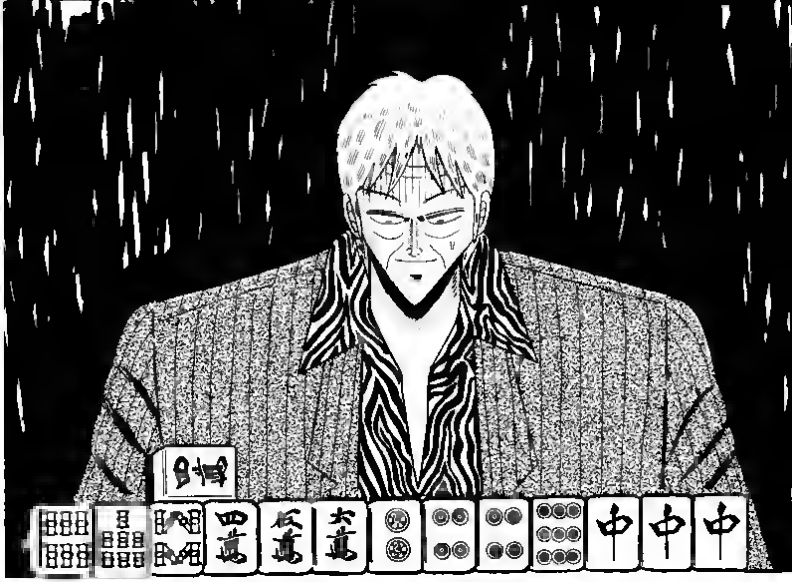
AKAGI'S HAND

WHAT LUCK .....!
HE'S GOT TWO OF THE DORA, 4-PIN...!
URGH...!
ALTHOUGH HE COULDN'T HAVE ASKED FOR MUCH BETTER THAN THIS FOR MAKING HIS HAND...
WHILE HE'S GOING FOR A QUICK WIN THERE'S STILL A DIFFERENCE OF 5800 POINTS BETWEEN HIM AND SOGA
IN THIS LAST ROUND, FOR AKAGI
HE HAS TO GET PAST THAT DIFFICULTY AT THE SAME TIME
A HAND THAT COULD MAKE A COMEBACK...!
HE NEEDS ONE MORE YAKU. HE COULD CONNECT IT TO RICHI OR SOMETHING
CHUN, 2 DORA
HALF HIS PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED WITH THESE TWO DORA.....
中
中

A CLOSED TRIPLE OF THE CHUN...! HE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TO HOPE FOR IT TO COME UP...
NEXT TURN
WITH THIS FIRST DRAW, DOES AKAGI HAVE BASICALLY WHAT HE NEEDS TO HUNT SOGA DOWN...?

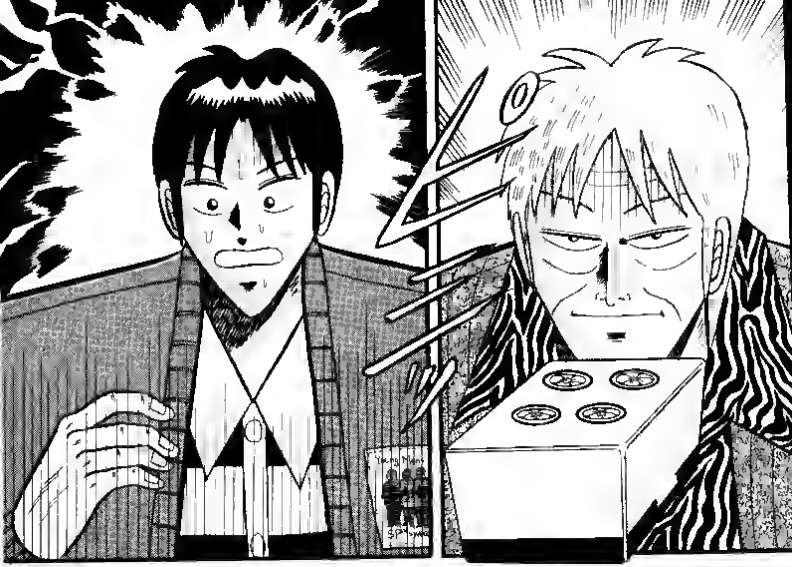
PON!
IN ONLY TWO TURNS, BOTH OF THEM GOT THEIR FANPAI.....!
A TYPICAL DEVELOPMENT WHEN PEOPLE ARE GOING FOR A QUICK WIN
THAT'S FAST...!
SOGA'S GOT HIS FANPAI NOW TOO...!
STILL CAN'T CALL ON ANYTHING...
AKAGI
HE STILL NEEDS ONE MORE YAKU
NOW SOGA CAN CALL ON ANY TILE AND DASH TOWARDS VICTORY.....!

FIRST OFF, THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE HIS HAND WILL BE CHUN 2 DORA.
IF HE CALLS
SURELY HE CAN'T BE PLANNING TO PON ON THE DORA.....
HE CAN'T MAKE A COMEBACK WITH LESS THAN A DIRECT HIT OR TSUMO FOR 5200 POINTS
STOPPING AT 3900 OR 5200
"LACKING ONE YAKU" IS A CRITICAL POINT IN THIS LAST STAGE THAT HE NEEDS TO GET PAST.....!
THINKING ABOUT IT LIKE THAT..... HE'S GOING TO LOSE TWO OR THREE TURNS ON HIS WAY TO A WIN, OR EVEN TO TENPAI.
IN OTHER WORDS, HE'LL LOSE.....!
HE'LL BE ONE OR TWO STEPS BEHIND HIM.....
HE'S COMPLETELY TIED DOWN.
WHEN YOU COMPARE THAT TO SOGA, WHO DOESN'T HAVE THAT LIMITATION



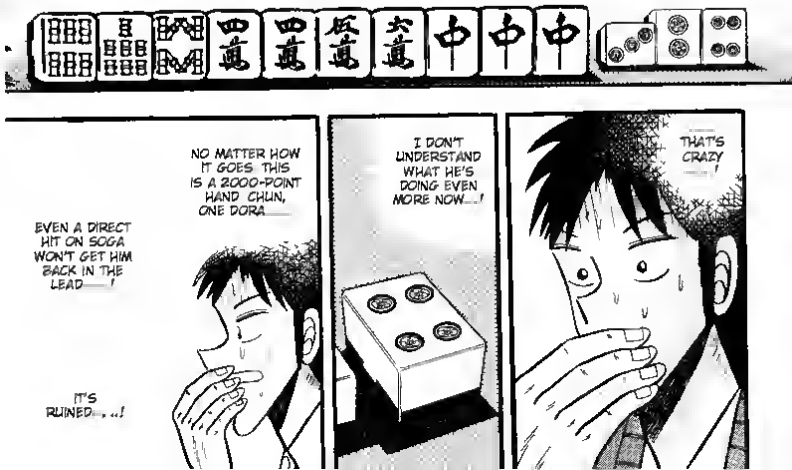
THIS HAND WOULD BE TWO TURNS TOO SLOW AGAINST SOGA.
BY PLAYING NORMALLY
AT THAT POINT IN TIME, AKAGI HAD A HUNCH, TOO.
WENT FAR BEYOND ANYTHING HIROYUKI COULD ANTICIPATE
BUT... FROM THAT POINT ON, AKAGI'S STYLE
THE SAME PREDICTION AS HIROYUKI'S.
ダッ

CHII!
WHY...?
CHII...?
URGH...!
NOW... THERE'S NOTHING HE CAN DO EXCEPT WIN BY TSUMO...
THAT KIND OF WAIT IS NEVER GOING TO WORK OUT...!
WHEN HE CALLED FOR IT HERE, THE SHAPE HE HAS LEFT IS A SINGLE 4-PIN WAIT...
SURE, HE NEEDED THAT 3-PIN...
四萬
伍萬
六萬
中



AKAGI: IN TENPAI WAITING ON 4-MAN OR 7-MAN

CHII


EVEN A DIRECT HIT ON SOGA WON'T GET HIM BACK IN THE LEAD——!
IT'S RUINED……!
NO MATTER HOW IT GOES THIS IS A 2000-POINT HAND CHUN, ONE DORA——
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HE'S DOING EVEN MORE NOW……!
THAT'S CRAZY——!

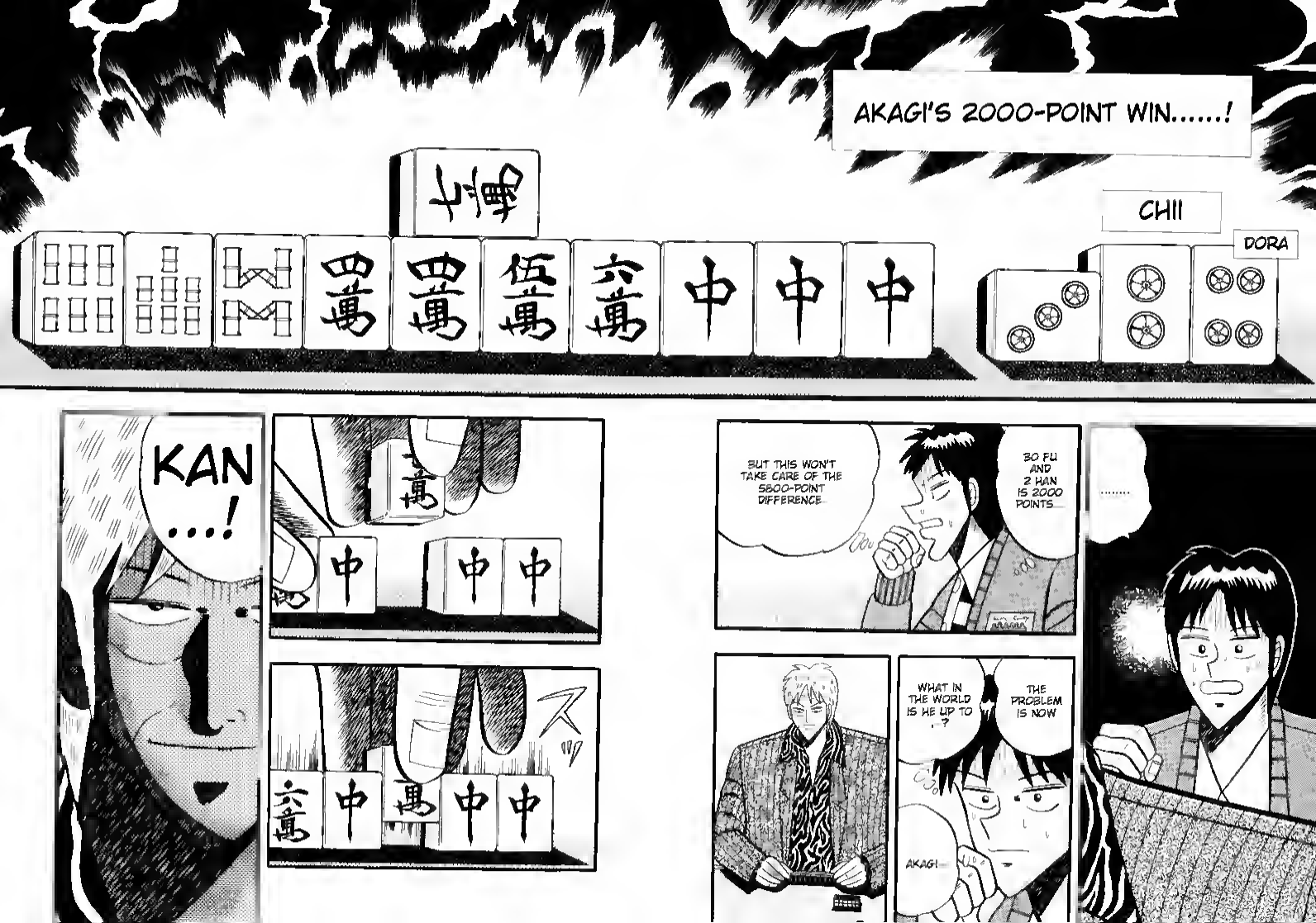
WHAT'S GOING ON.....?

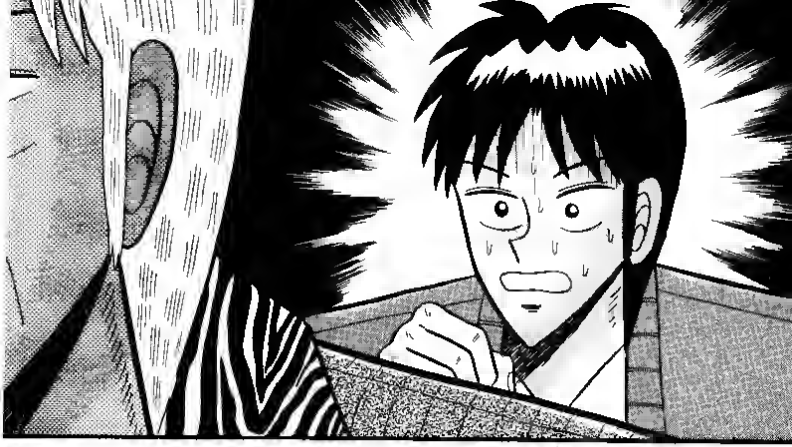
I HAVE A REAL GOOD IDEA OF WHAT'S GOING ON IN AKAGI'S HEAD RIGHT NOW
HEY..... SETTLE DOWN AND WATCH.....
IN HIS HEAD.....?

WHEN HE FEELS LIKE IT.....
HE CAN TAKE CARE OF THE POINT DIFFERENCE OR WHATEVER LATER.
UHHH.....

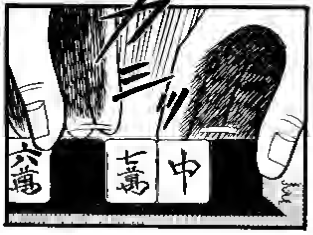
HEH HEH

JUST WATCH...
IT'LL END UP WORKING OUT SOMEHOW...
NOW, NOW
HOW CAN YOU SAY WHEN HE FEELS LIKE IT, WHEN HIS HAND IS...
BUT...
IT'LL BE OVER IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE...!
TWO TURNS LATER
六萬
伍萬


AKAGI'S 2000-POINT WIN.....!
CHII
DORA
KAN ...!
BUT THIS WON'T TAKE CARE OF THE 5800-POINT DIFFERENCE
30 FU AND 2 HAN IS 2000 POINTS
.....
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS HE UP TO ..?
THE PROBLEM IS NOW
AKAGI



URGH...


六萬
七萬
中
SWK

IT'S CLEARLY A FAKE KAN, BUT
SURE, FROM MY POINT OF VIEW, IT'S OBVIOUS AT A GLANCE.
七萬
中

.....HOLY SHIT, HE'S GOT GUTS .....!

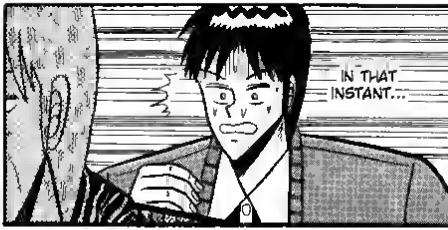
.....

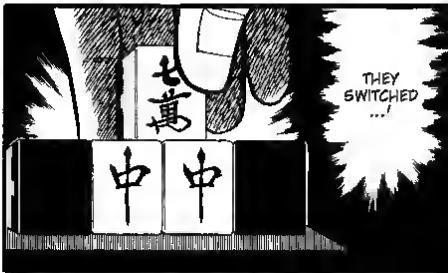
IT'S DISGUISED AS A CLOSED KAN...!
LOOKING AT IT FROM SOGA'S SIDE, NOTHING SEEMS WRONG WITH IT...
WHOA, HEY...
.....IT'S A TACTIC NOBODY WOULD EVER IMAGINE.
HE'S FEARLESS...! AND AGAINST AN OPPONENT OF SOGA'S CLASS
THE CHUN IS IN GINJI'S DISCARDS.

AKAGI CALMLY TOOK HIS DEAD WALL DRAW!
BUT WITHOUT REGARD FOR ANY OF HIROYUKI'S WORRIES
MORE THAN FEARLESS, THIS IS RECKLESS.....!
HE'S PLAYING A DANGEROUS GAME
A SMOOTH DRAW.
NEVER TOO QUICK, AND NOT TOO SLOWLY
AND THE DISCARDED CHUN...
AT THAT POINT IN TIME, THE DEAD WALL DRAW
AND BROUGHT IT BACK.

SWITCHED PLACES.....!
THAT WAS WHEN SOGA AND THE OTHERS NOTICED, BUT
URGH
カシ
中
中
THE CHUN WAS ALREADY IN HIS HAND!
IT WAS TOO LATE.....

AS SOON AS IT TOUCHED THE TILES DISGUISED AS A KAN..
AND THEN
中
五萬
六萬
七萬
中


IN THAT INSTANT...


七萬
中
中
THEY SWITCHED ...!

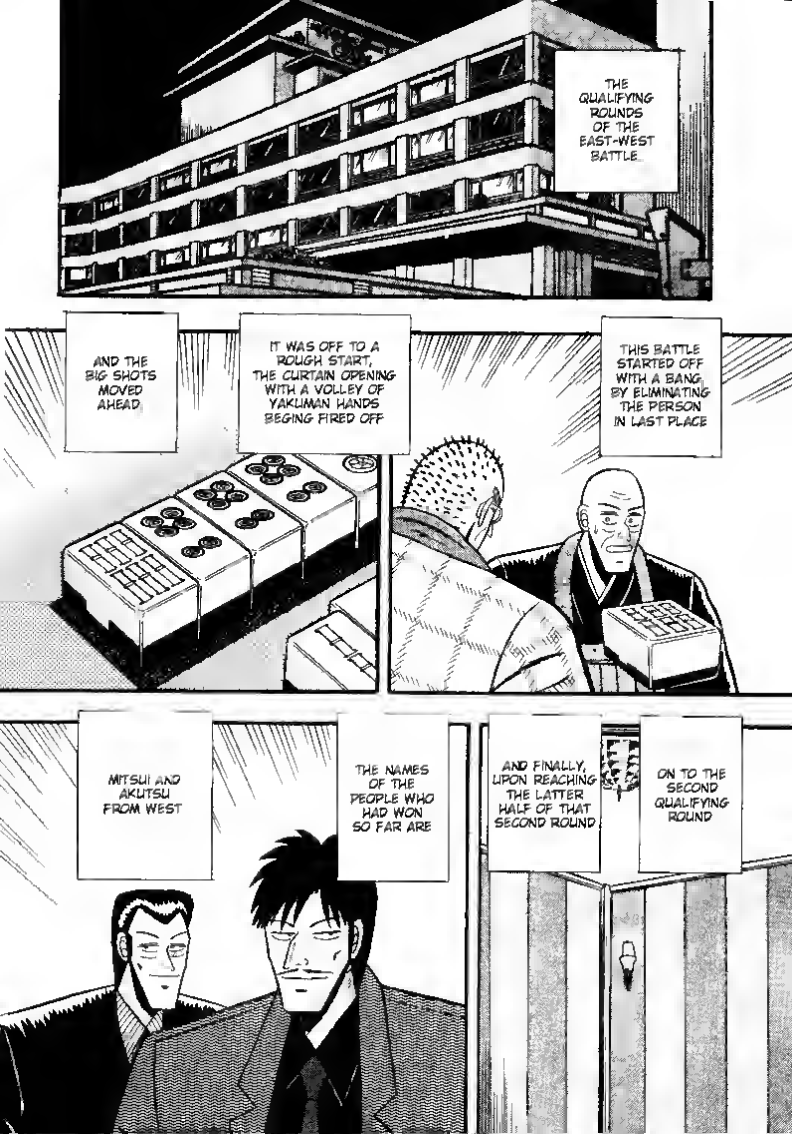
LIGHTNING-FAST.....!
IN LESS THAN THE BLINK OF AN EYE
七萬
伍萬
六萬
中
中
TO A REAL CLOSED KAN ON THE CHUN.
ITS SHAPE CHANGED...
萬
中
中
七萬
TSUMO!

ドバラ...
RINSHAN-KAIHOU, CHUN, 1 DORA.
ざわ
ざわ..
IT'S A COMEBACK WIN.
CLOSED KAN IS 32 FU AND 3 HAN MAKES IT MANGAN
HEH HEH ...
IT... WASN'T JUST THAT IT WAS FAST.
HOW DO I EVEN DESCRIBE IT.
EVEN SEEING IT FROM BEHIND HIM, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.
THE FINAL SWITCH OF THE 7-MAN AND THE CHUN.....
AMAZING...
GRGH...

THE TECHNIQUE OF SUPREME SILENCE

SO NOBODY NOTICED THE CHUN IN THE DISCARDS UNTIL A MOMENT AGO...
AND THAT WAS WHEN THEY FINALLY SAW THROUGH IT.
THERE WASN'T EVEN A HINT OF WHAT HE DID
Ooo

天
CHAPTER 50
GANPAI


THE QUALIFYING ROUNDS OF THE EAST-WEST BATTLE...
AND THE BIG SHOTS MOVED AHEAD.
IT WAS OFF TO A ROUGH START, THE CURTAIN OPENING WITH A VOLLEY OF YAKUMAN HANDS BEGING FIRED OFF
THIS BATTLE STARTED OFF WITH A BANG, BY ELIMINATING THE PERSON IN LAST PLACE
MITSUI AND AKUTSU FROM WEST
THE NAMES OF THE PEOPLE WHO HAD WON SO FAR ARE
AND FINALLY, UPON REACHING THE LATTER HALF OF THAT SECOND ROUND
ON TO THE SECOND QUALIFYING ROUND

AND AKAGI SHIGERU FROM EAST.
THOSE FOUR PEOPLE...!
THEIR GENERAL, HARADA
WOULD GO TO FOUR MORE PEOPLE .....!
THE RIGHTS TO THOSE SEATS
INCLUDING THOSE FOUR, EIGHT PEOPLE WOULD GO ON TO THE SHOWDOWN ROUND.

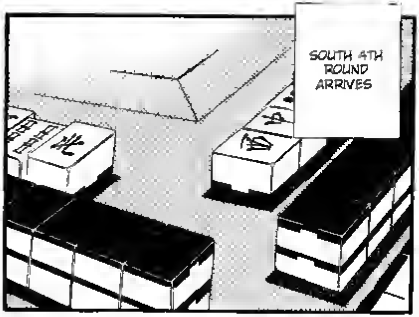
NOW, THE BATTLE
IS GRADUALLY STARTING TO LOOK LIKE A FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

THERE ARE FEW SEATS REMAINING
AND NOT MANY BATTLES AFTER THIS.
EVERYBODY IS GETTING DESPERATE!
BUT HERE
THE ONE WHO TAKES THE 5TH SEAT IS

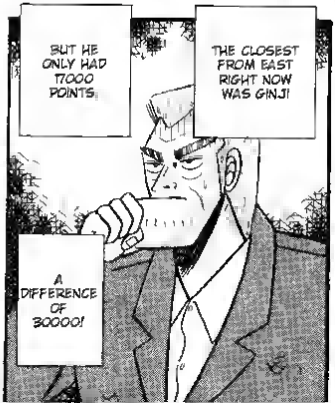
TSUMO...!

SOGA MITSUI .....!
OF COURSE
WAS DRAWN BACK TOWARD WEST
THE FLOW THAT HAD ONCE TILTED TOWARD EAST
HE HAD A CRUSHING VICTORY WITH CLOSE TO 80000 POINTS ALL BY HIMSELF
THREE SEATS LEFT...!

THEN, IN THE NEXT BATTLE


SOUTH 4TH ROUND ARRIVES

THE HAN-CHAN ADVANCED WITH WEST DOMINATING THE GAME.


BUT HE ONLY HAD 17000 POINTS.
THE CLOSEST FROM EAST RIGHT NOW WAS GINJI
A DIFFERENCE OF 30000!

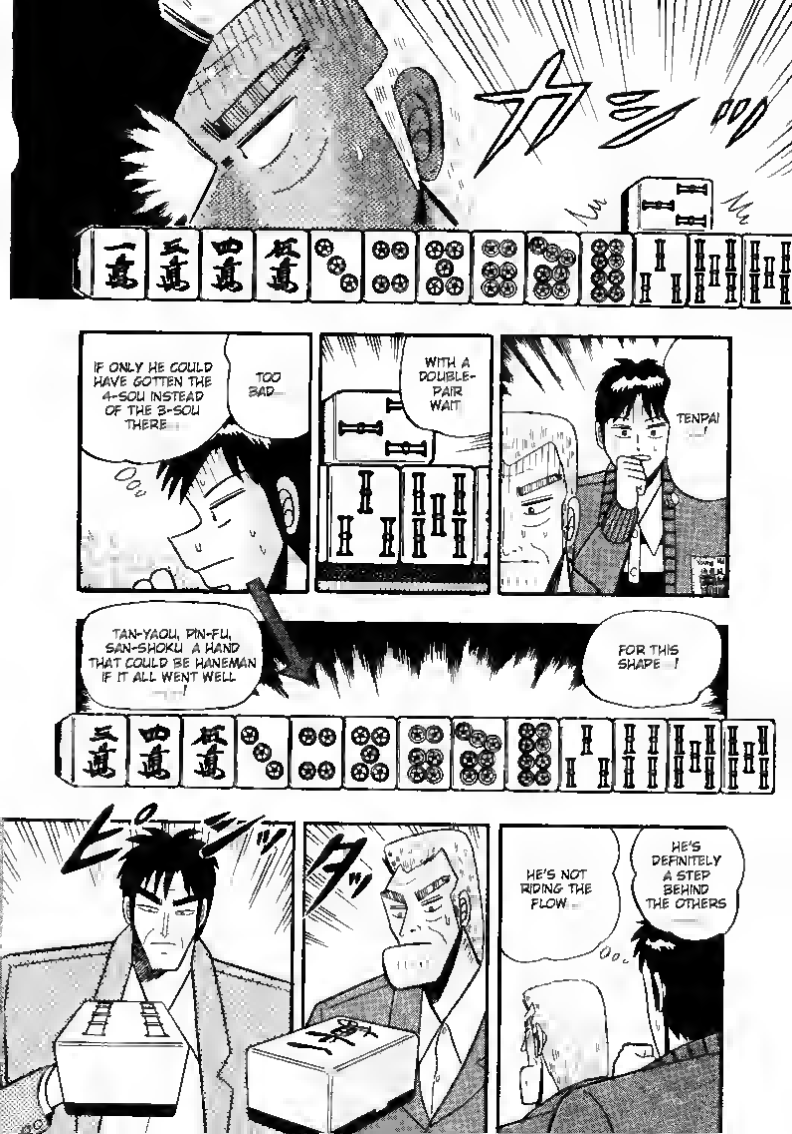
WITH A MASSIVE 47000 POINTS
IN THE LEAD IS NANGOU FROM WEST

BASICALLY ALREADY HAD THE 6TH SEAT IN THE SHOWDOWN...!
NANGOU.....

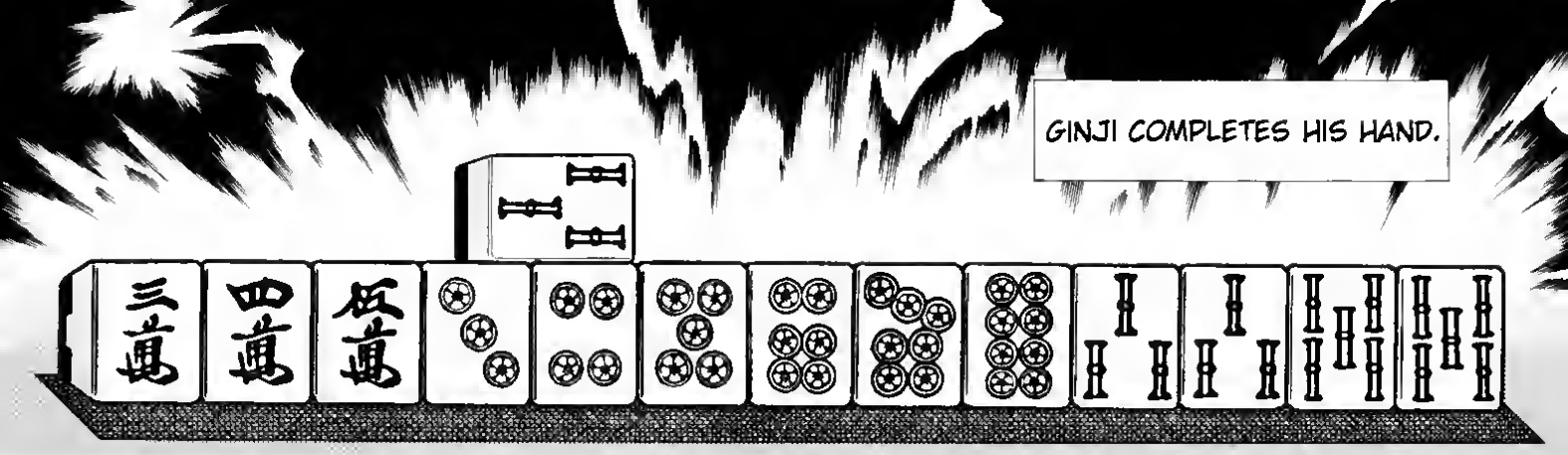
6TH TURN
H''...

A FAINT HOPE
GINJI'S ONLY HOPE IS THAT IT'S HIS LAST TURN AS DEALER.

NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT'S GOING TO BE ROUGH
A 30000 POINT DIFFERENCE, HUH.....


IF ONLY HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN THE 4-SOU INSTEAD OF THE 3-SOU THERE...
TOO BAD...
WITH A DOUBLE-PAIR WAIT...
TENPAI!
TAN-YAOU, PIN-FU, SAN-SHOKU. A HAND THAT COULD BE HANEMAN IF IT ALL WENT WELL...
FOR THIS SHAPE!
HE'S NOT RIDING THE FLOW...
HE'S DEFINITELY A STEP BEHIND THE OTHERS

URGH
CHII!
NANGOU'S IN TENPAI TOO.....!
TAKING A MIDDLE TILE FOR A DOUBLE-SIDED WAIT MEANS.....
HERE IT COMES.....
BUT NEXT TURN
GINJI'S WAIT ISN'T VERY GOOD AT ALL. IS THIS GOING TO BE THE END OF THIS GAME.....!?


GINJI COMPLETES HIS HAND.

IT'S THE BEGINNING OF A COMEBACK WIN...!

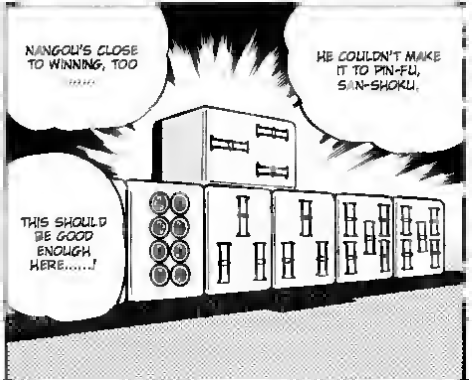
AT LEAST...
IT'S A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION...!

HE GOT IT IN THE NICK OF TIME...!
TAN-YAO, TSUMO...!

.....
THERE IT IS ...!
...!

AT THAT TIME, GINJI HAD SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT IN MIND...

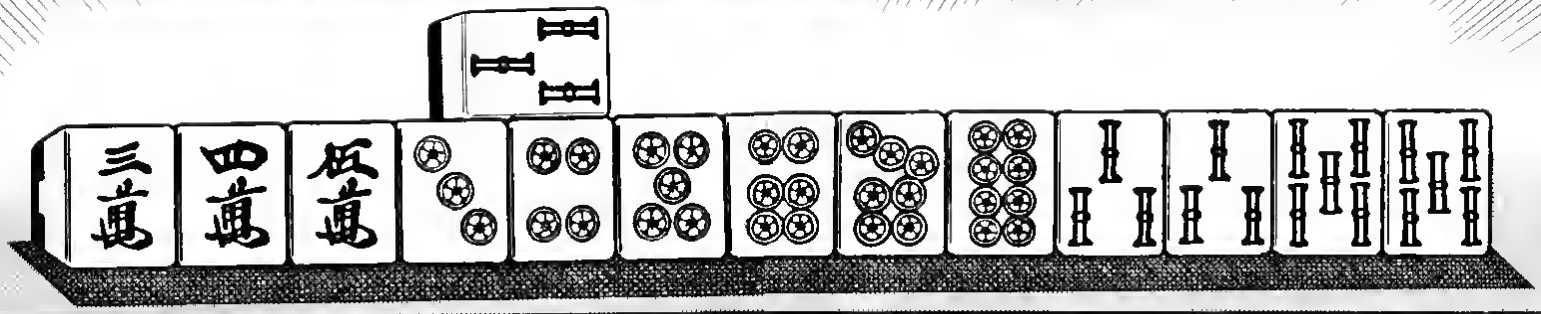
BUT.....
IF HE CAN GO FOR ANOTHER ROUND AS DEALER..... HE CAN STILL WIN.....!

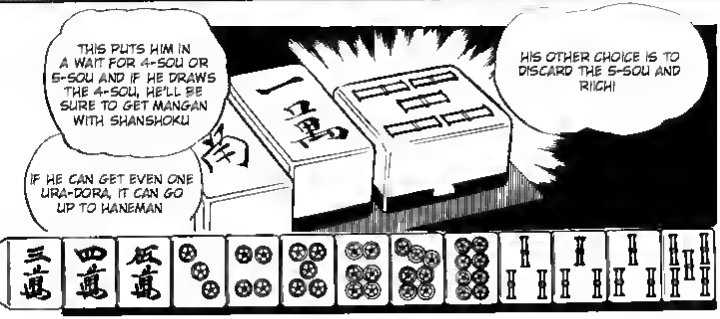

NANGOU'S CLOSE TO WINNING, TOO.....
HE COULDN'T MAKE IT TO PIN-FU, SAN-SHOKU.
THIS SHOULD BE GOOD ENOUGH HERE.....!

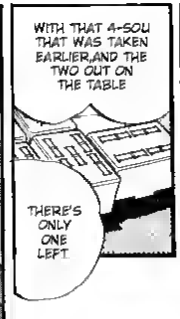
.....
Young Men's Ceremony
wear / Afterwear
GINJI...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO WIN?
HUH...?
?
FURITEN RIICHI?
DON'T TELL ME HE'S THINKING OF GOING FOR THAT...!

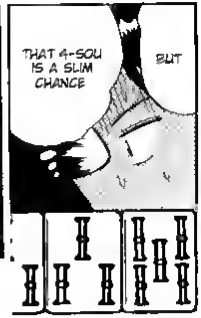
IT'LL ONLY BRING THE DIFFERENCE TO 16000 POINTS.
EVEN IF HE TSUMOS FOR MANGAN
IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR A COMEBACK.
BUT.....
.....
HE'LL NEED A BAIMAN HAND TO MAKE A COMEBACK, BUT ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, THIS HAND WILL NEVER REACH BAIMAN ...!
THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS IS 30000
IF HE'S DARING TO CONSIDER GOING INTO FURITEN RICHI
.....THAT'S THE ONLY THING I CAN THINK OF, BUT
WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO TAKE THE EASY WIN HERE...?

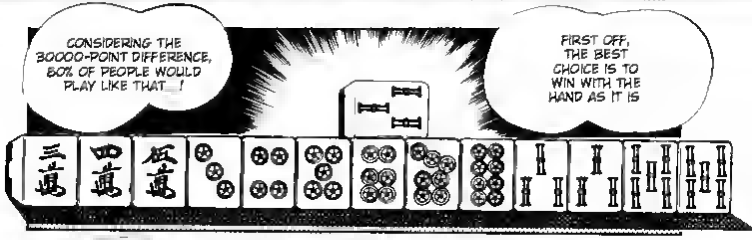
HE HAS THREE CHOICES FOR THIS HAND!

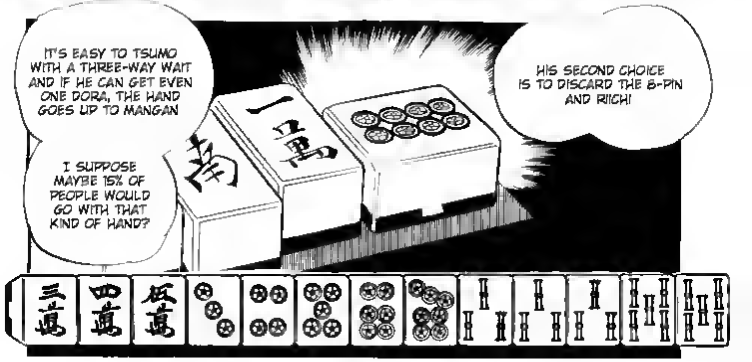



THIS PUTS HIM IN A WAIT FOR 4-SOU OR 5-SOU AND IF HE DRAWS THE 4-SOU, HE'LL BE SURE TO GET MANGAN WITH SHANSHOKU
IF HE CAN GET EVEN ONE URA-DORA, IT CAN GO UP TO HANEMAN
HIS OTHER CHOICE IS TO DISCARD THE 5-SOU AND RIICHI

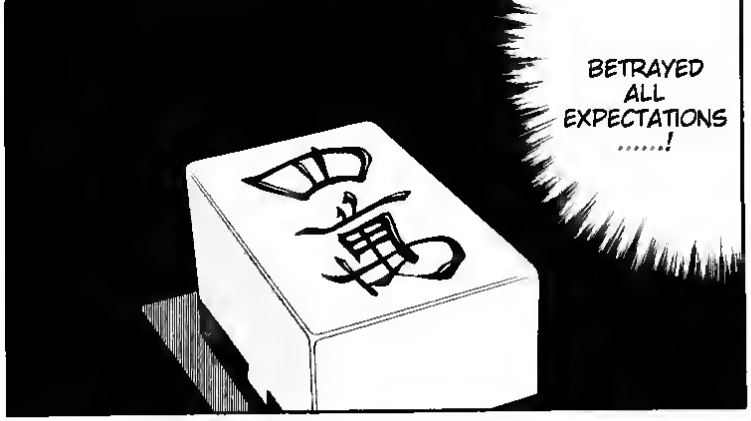


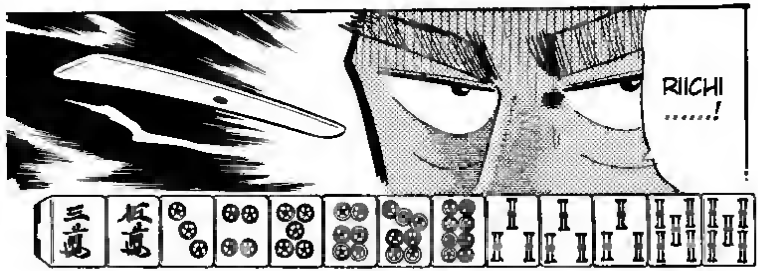



CONSIDERING THE 30000-POINT DIFFERENCE, 80% OF PEOPLE WOULD PLAY LIKE THAT...!
FIRST OFF, THE BEST CHOICE IS TO WIN WITH THE HAND AS IT IS

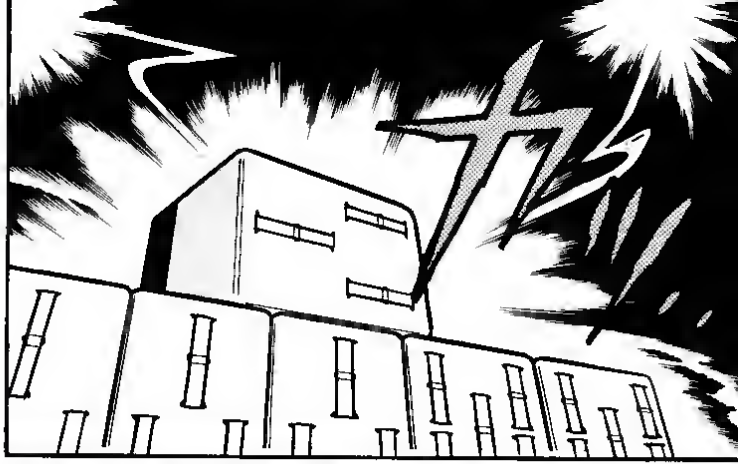

IT'S EASY TO TSUMO WITH A THREE-WAY WAIT AND IF HE CAN GET EVEN ONE DORA, THE HAND GOES UP TO MANGAN
I SUPPOSE MAYBE 15% OF PEOPLE WOULD GO WITH THAT KIND OF HAND?
HIS SECOND CHOICE IS TO DISCARD THE 8-PIN AND RIICHI

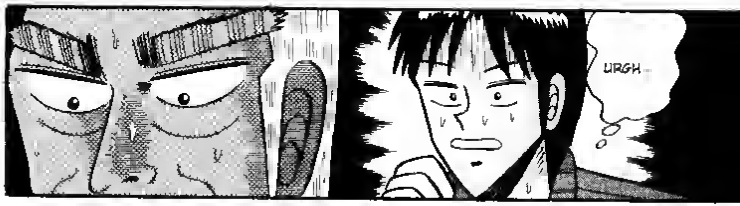
BUT
WIN AS IT IS, A 3-WAY WAIT
OR AIM FOR SAN-SHOKU
OUT OF THOSE THREE...
GINJI'S CHOICE
HUH...?

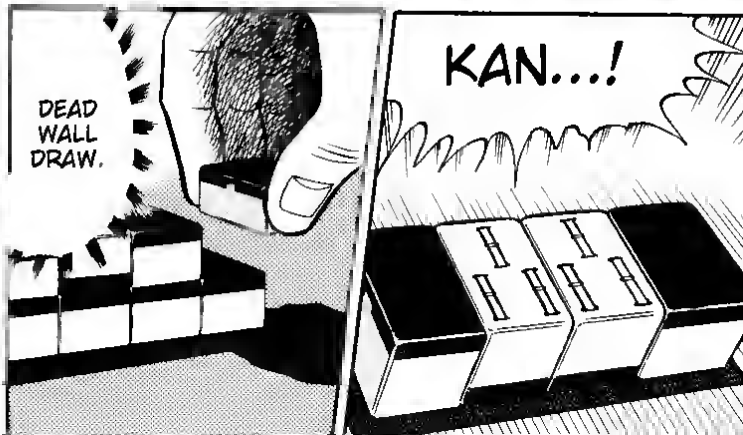

BETRAYED ALL EXPECTATIONS .....!


RIICHI .....!

NEXT TURN
WHY NOT TAKE THE THREE-SIDED ONE ...?
THAT'S CRAZY .....
WHY DID HE GO FOR A CLOSED WAIT ON THE 4-MAN...?
A CLOSED WAIT ON THE 4-MAN ...!




URGH...


DEAD WALL DRAW.
KAN...!

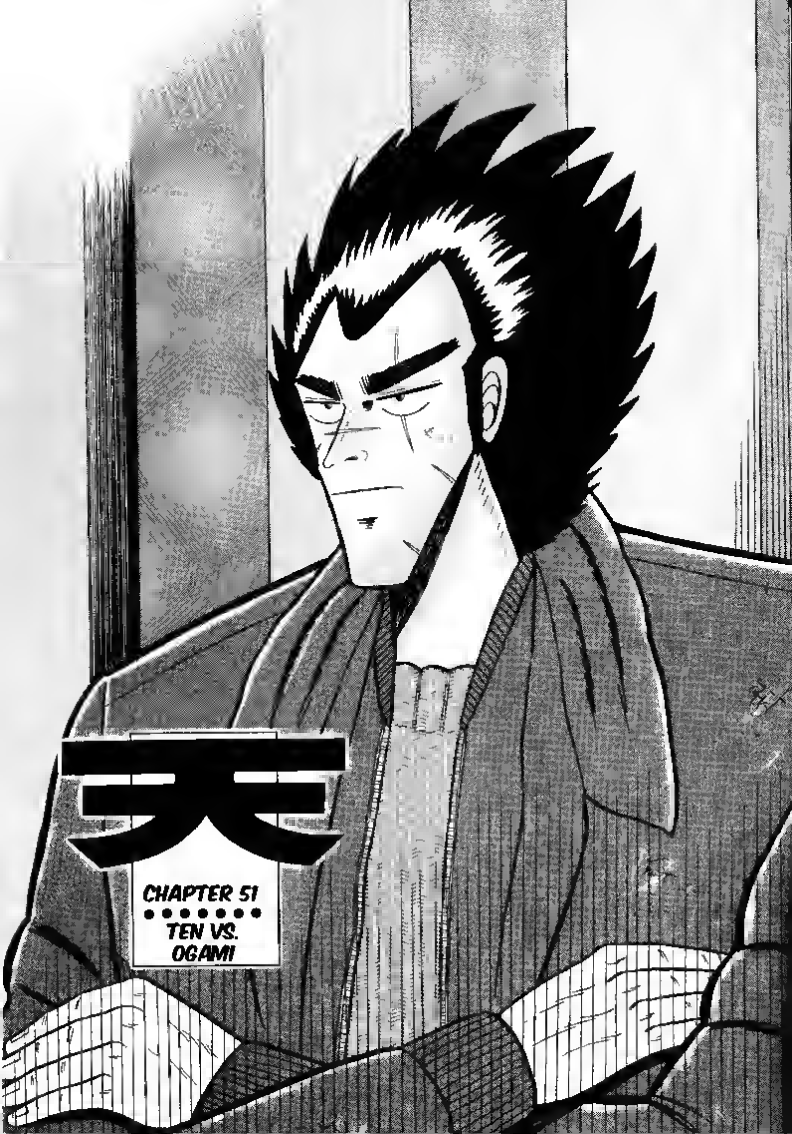
四萬
.....
THE 4-MAN FOR THE CLOSED WAIT...!

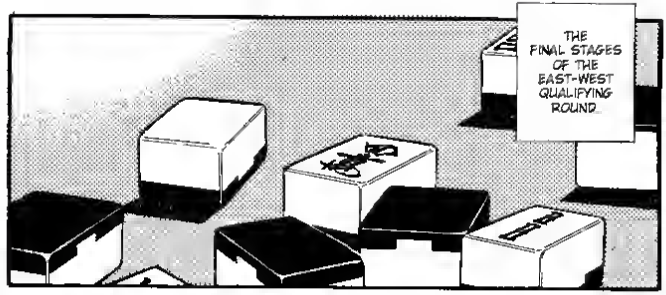
ハラハラ…!
TSUMO...!
GANPAI .....!
THERE'S NOTHING A DRAW LIKE THAT COULD BE EXCEPT GANPAI.
THIS... GETTING THE 3-SOU AND TSUMO-ING ON THE 4-MAN...
HIS MASTER CRAFTSMANSH..? SHOWED UP HERE...!
RIICHI, TAN-YAO, RINSHAN, TSUMO.
DEALER MANGAN .....!

NANGOU
COME ON, DON'T JUST BE STARING OFF INTO SPACE, TURN OVER THE NEW DORA.
HEH HEH
KH...
WHAT...!?

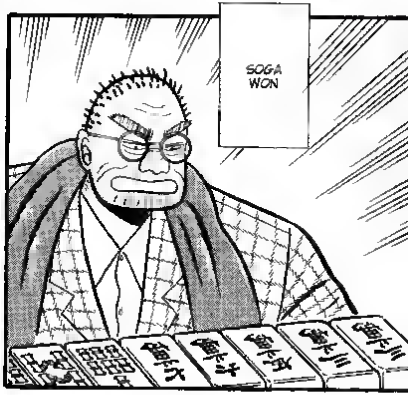
4 DORA ...!
THE DORA IS 3-SOU .....!
DEALER BAIMAN MAKES IT 24000 POINTS AND CONSIDERING YOUR PAYMENT OF 8000, THAT FILLS UP THE POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US FOR 32000 POINTS
IT'S A COMEBACK WIN.....!
.....WELL NOW, WE DON'T EVEN NEED TO LOOK AT THE URA-DORA.....
HEH HEH HEH
AMAZING.....!
.....
ざわ
SORRY ABOUT THAT. NANGOU
ざわ…

THE POINT DIFFERENCE OF 30000
VANISHED IN AN INSTANT..!
IT'S AMAZING TO SEE HIS GANPAI IN ACTION.
THAT TERRIFYING DESTRUCTIVE POWER.....!
THE FIRST SIGN OF GINJI'S SECRET
ざわ・・・
ざわ・・
HAS JUST BEEN.....
SHOWN FOR THE FIRST TIME.....!
THE MASTER OF GANPAI, ASAI GINJI, GOES ON TO THE SHOWDOWN ROUND.


CHAPTER 51
TEN VS.
OGAMI


THE FINAL STAGES OF THE EAST-WEST QUALIFYING ROUND

AND SO DID GINJI.


SOGA WON

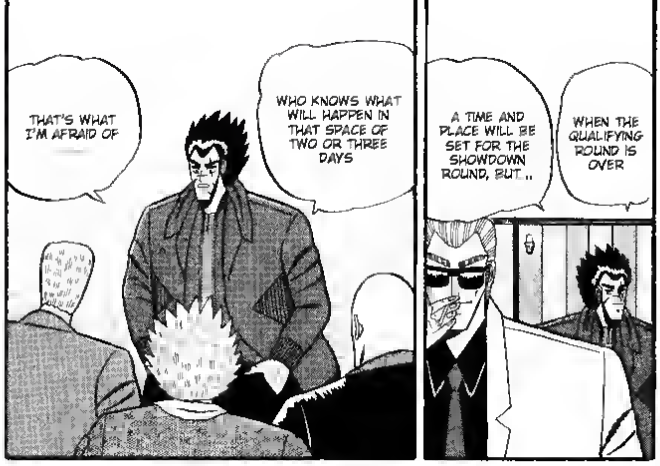
TEN, HIROYUKI, AND WASHIO.
THERE WERE STILL THREE PEOPLE FROM EAST WHO HADN'T WON YET

TWO OF THESE FIVE WOULD CLIMB UP TO REACH THE SHOWDOWN ROUND...!
YOSHII AND NANGOU...!
AND TWO PEOPLE FROM WEST...
ざわ
ざわ..
BUT
IT SOUNDS LIKE WEST WANTS TO BRING IN ANOTHER REP PLAYER...
WITH YOSHII NOT FEELING WELL OR SOMETHING
HUH...?
SOMETHING... A BIT FUNNY IS GOING ON...
ざわ..
WHAT'S WRONG...?

HE SHOULD JUST KICK THEIR DEMANDS TO THE CURB, RIGHT AWAY!
MAYBE, BUT...
JUST WHAT THE HELL ARE THEY TRYING TO PULL HERE? HE WAS DOING FINE JUST A MINUTE AGO!
IT SEEMS LIKE TEN'S GOING TO GO FOR IT...!
HUH...?
ENTERING IN YOSHII'S PLACE...
THEIR GOAL IS OBVIOUS.
WHY'D YOU GIVE IN TO A DEMAND LIKE THAT?
TEN... WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS...?
IS GOING TO BE THAT MAN, OGAMI!

HE'S PART OF A PLAN TO TAKE OUT TEN.....!
WITHOUT A DOUBT
HE'S NOT AN OPPONENT YOU WANT TO TAKE LIGHTLY.
I THINK SO TOO.....
EVEN ONE HAN-CHAN IS GOING TO BE ROUGH IN A SORT OF 'INFORMATION BATTLE', IT HURTS TO HAVE A HANDICAP.
THERE'S NO WAY TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF SURPRISE ATTACK WILL COME YOUR WAY.
I KNOW YOU'RE A GOOD PLAYER, TEN, BUT.....
THAT GUY OVER THERE PROBABLY KNOWS THE WAY YOU PLAY ALL TOO WELL, TEN.
AND YOU DON'T HAVE ANY INFORMATION TO USE AGAINST HIM AT ALL.

DESPITE THAT... I THINK I'LL ACCEPT IT
TEN...
YOU COULD GET KNOCKED RIGHT OFF YOUR FEET.
BUT AT THE SAME TIME
THE LEADER OF WEST HARADA, IS WELL-KNOWN AS THE BEST REP PLAYER OUT THERE RIGHT NOW
ONE IMPORTANT THING
EVERYBODY'S FORGETTING
HE'S ALSO THE GANG LEADER FOR THE LARGEST VIOLENT CRIME SYNDICATE IN THE KANSAI AREA!
HUH ..?


THAT'S WHAT I'M AFRAID OF
WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN THAT SPACE OF TWO OR THREE DAYS
A TIME AND PLACE WILL BE SET FOR THE SHOWDOWN ROUND, BUT ..
WHEN THE QUALIFYING ROUND IS OVER

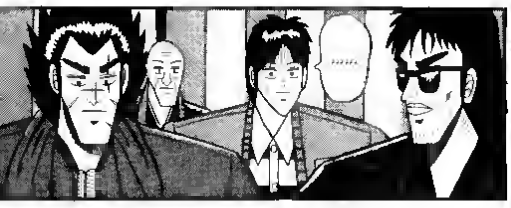
YOU CAN'T RULE OUT THE IDEA THAT HE'D GO AS FAR AS USING VIOLENCE TO SHUT DOWN THE MEMBERS OF EAST WHO'D WON
THE GUY HARADA WILL USE ANY MEANS NECESSARY

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN ...?
BUT IF WE LET HIM HAVE A NEW REP PLAYER...
.....

EVEN IF HE TAKES OUT ONE OR TWO PEOPLE
WE CAN PUT IN KEN OR KANAMITSU
SO THE OTHER SIDE CAN'T ACT TOO RASHLY NOW.....!
IT DOESN'T BENEFIT THEM IN ANY WAY.
SO ACCEPTING A NEW REP PLAYER IS
IN OTHER WORDS, BUYING SAFETY FOR THE PEOPLE WHO WIN.....!
NOT TOO BAD.....!
I THINK I'LL ACCEPT IT.....!

AND SO
THE QUALIFYING ROUND RESUMED.
BY ACCEPTING THE REP PLAYER, OGAMI
TWO SEATS REMAIN...!

ざわ
ざわ...


.....

JUST...

I WONDER WHAT KIND OF PLAYER OGAMI IS...?
WHO KNOWS ...

IN THE SOUTH 1ST ROUND, TEN WAS NORTH.

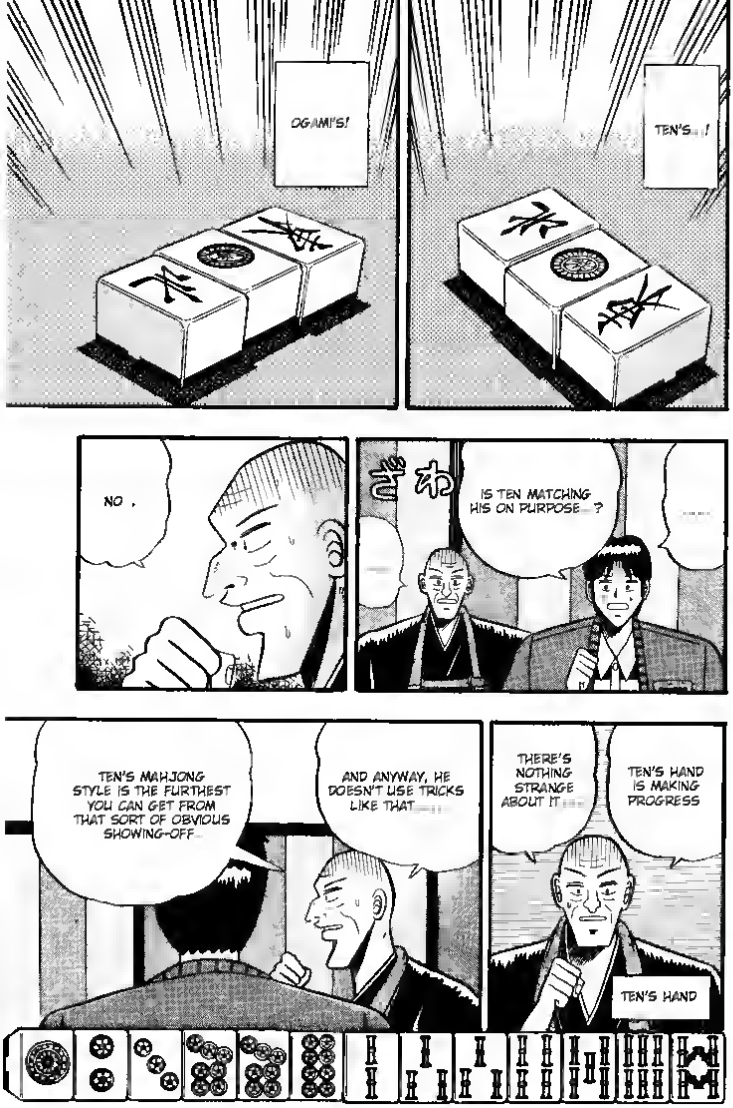
OGAMI WAS SEATED TO TEN'S LEFT.

IT WAS MENTIONED A LITTLE WHILE AGO...
THAT THIS MAN, OGAMI, MUST HAVE RESEARCHED TEN'S PLAYING STYLE VERY THOROUGHLY
THAT'S ALL WE CAN BE SURE OF...
SO TEN IS BEING VERY CAREFUL, TOO
ESPECIALLY IN THE ENDGAME...
カミッ
北

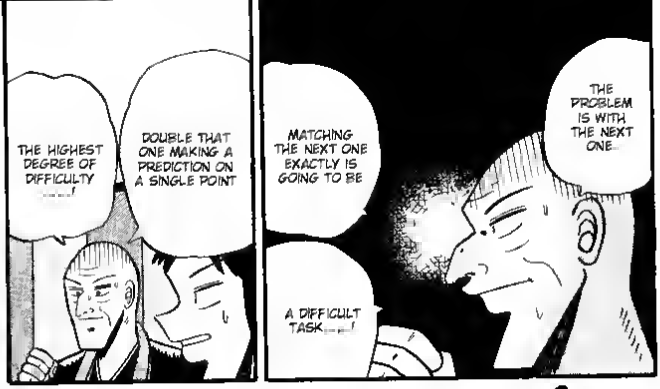
THE MATCH BEGAN QUIETLY
NOBODY HAD NOTICED ANYTHING UNNATURAL YET
3RD TURN
THE FIRST ONE TO NOTICE "THAT THING" WAS HIROYUKI

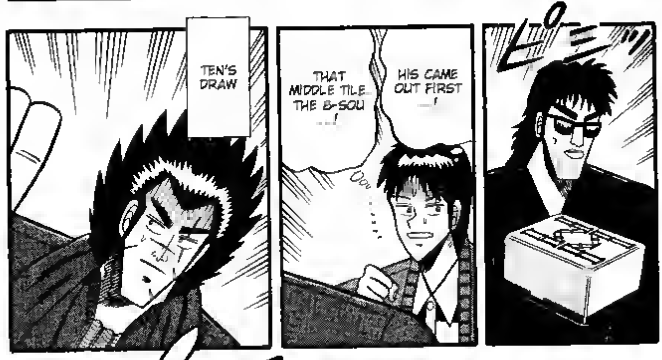
北

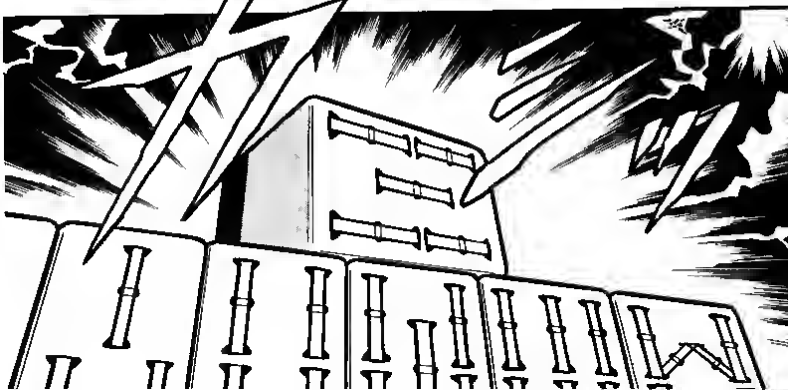
EXACTLY THE SAME.
TEN AND OGAMI'S DISCARDS ARE
HUH...?
THEY'RE THE SAME


OGAMI'S!
TEN'S...!
NO.
ざわ
IS TEN MATCHING HIS ON PURPOSE...?
TEN'S MAHJONG STYLE IS THE FURTHEST YOU CAN GET FROM THAT SORT OF OBVIOUS SHOWING-OFF...
AND ANYWAY, HE DOESN'T USE TRICKS LIKE THAT...
THERE'S NOTHING STRANGE ABOUT IT...
TEN'S HAND IS MAKING PROGRESS
TEN'S HAND

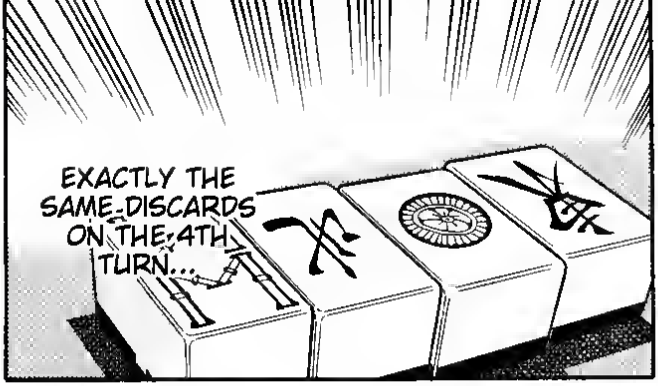
WELL... THESE LAST THREE TURNS SHARE A COMMON PATTERN.
YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO MAKE ANY PREDICTIONS
HE'S FIGURING IT OUT AND DISCARDING THE SAME TILES TEN WILL BE, BEFORE HIM...
SOMETHING STRANGE COMING FROM OGAMI
SO IT'S COINCIDENCE OR...
OGAMI...?
FOR INSTANCE...
OTHER PLAYERS DISCARDED THE TON...
YOU'D ALSO PLAY IT HERE TO KEEP OTHERS FROM CALLING ON IT.
THE PEI IS HIS OWN WIND BUT HE DOESN'T NEED IT FOR MENZEN TSUMO, TAN-YAO, PIN-FU
THE FLOW OF THE TILES IS RELATIVELY EASY TO PREDICT...
AND THEN AN ISOLATED WORD TILE ON THE THIRD TURN
THIS IS NORMAL TOO
NEXT IS A USELESS 1 OR 9 TILE


THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY...!
DOUBLE THAT ONE MAKING A PREDICTION ON A SINGLE POINT
MATCHING THE NEXT ONE EXACTLY IS GOING TO BE
A DIFFICULT TASK...!
THE PROBLEM IS WITH THE NEXT ONE...


TEN'S DRAW
THAT MIDDLE TILE THE 8-SOU...!
HIS CAME OUT FIRST...!



11-SHAN-TEN
ざわ..
HIS LEFT-OVER TILE IS THE 8-SOU.....!
.....
ドン!!
THEY MATCHED UP ON THE 4TH TURN...!
北
.....
ざわ
ざわ

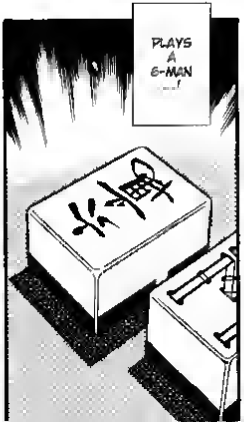

EXACTLY THE SAME DISCARDS ON THE 4TH TURN...

WHY IS HE DOING THAT ...?
BUT...

THE TILE THAT TEN WILL DISCARD NEXT...
THIS GUY, OGAMI, HAS IT FIGURED OUT...

THIS ISN'T COINCIDENCE...

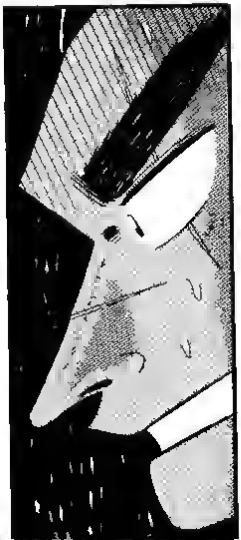
6-MAN ...?


PLAYS A 6-MAN ...!

5TH TURN, OGAMI

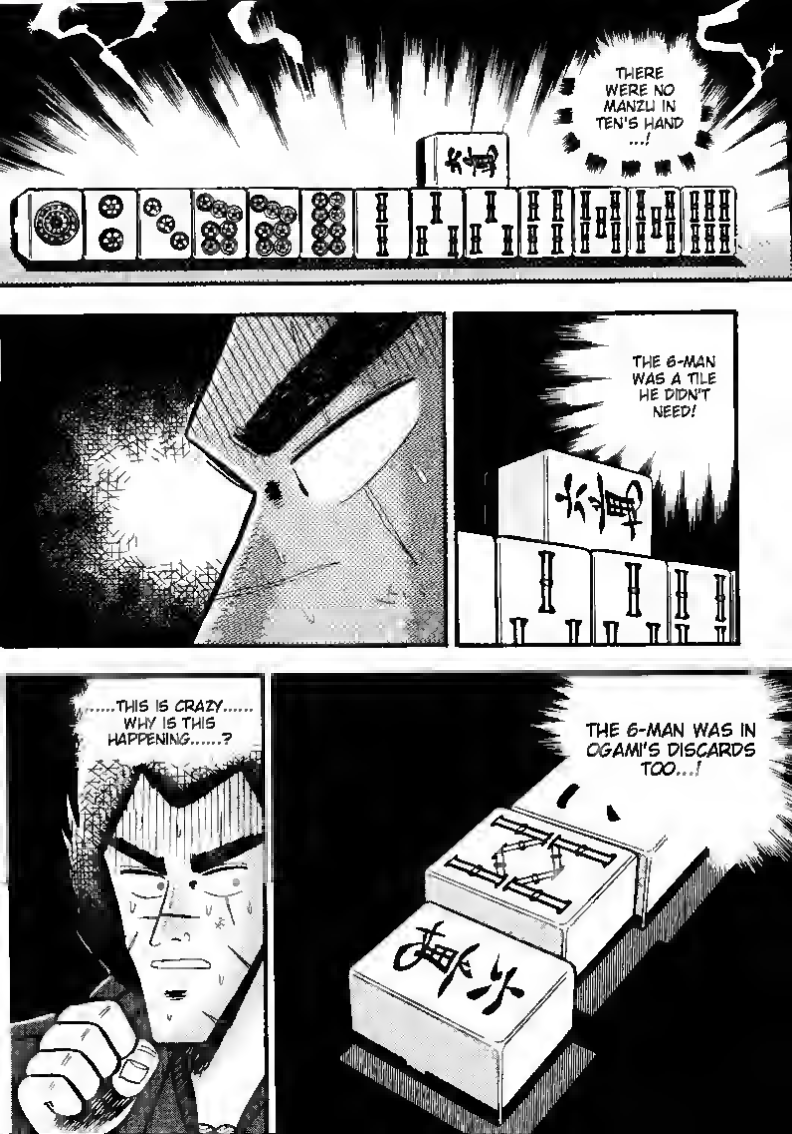
TEN'S HAND
TEN DOESN'T HAVE A 6-MAN IN HIS HAND.....!
ほっ。。。
EVEN BEING ABLE TO MATCH HIS TILES PREFECTLY UP TO THE 4TH TURN IS AN UNBELIEVABLY DIFFICULT GOD-LIKE SKILL TO HAVE...
BUT...
NOW HE CAN'T DISCARD THE SAME TILE ANY MORE.
MUST HAVE RESEARCHED TEN VERY CLOSELY.....!
THIS OGAMI GUY.....
GUESS THE KEY TO THIS GUY'S TRICK IS BROKEN NOW.....

AT THAT POINT IN TIME



WHEN TEN SAW THAT

THE BLOOD DRAINED FROM HIS FACE.
六萬


THERE WERE NO MANZU IN TEN'S HAND ...!
THE 6-MAN WAS A TILE HE DIDN'T NEED!
.....THIS IS CRAZY..... WHY IS THIS HAPPENING.....?
THE 6-MAN WAS IN OGAMI'S DISCARDS TOO...!

CAN SEE THE FUTURE.
IT'S LIKE THIS MAN

CHAPTER 52
BLADE OF SMOKE

OGAMI'S DISCARD WAS THE 6-MAN
THEN, ON THE 5TH TURN
UNTIL THE 4TH TURN, TEN AND OGAMI'S DISCARDS HAD EXACTLY THE SAME TILES LINED UP IN A ROW
6-MAN WAS THE ONLY MANZU TILE IN TEN'S HAND !
THE 6-MAN
THEN THE TILE TEN DREW ON THAT SAME TURN WAS

AS INTENDED BY OGAMI
FIVE OF THE SAME TILES!
NOW THEY LINED UP THE SAME FOR THE 5TH TURN!
HOW DOES HE KNOW THAT KIND OF THING?

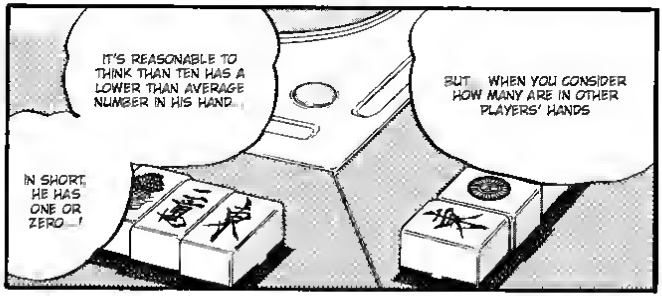
TEN AND OGAMI HAD TON, 1-PIN, PEI, 8-SOU, AND 6-MAN.....!
IN THE DISCARDS OF THE FOUR PEOPLE HERE SO FAR
THESE WERE NANGOU'S...
WASHIO'S WERE LIKE SO...!
HOW COULD HE KNOW IT WOULD BE THE 8-SOU AND THE 6-MAN...?
SO HOW...?
HOW COULD THIS MAN KNOW THAT KIND OF THING...
THIS IS ALL THE INFORMATION HE HAS...
AND THE ONLY TILES OGAMI KNOWS ARE HIS OWN 13 TILES.

HEH HEH ....
DOING SOMETHING LIKE THAT IS--
WHATEVER THOSE 13 TILES MIGHT BE
AKAGI...
HEH HEH ...
IT'S RATHER EASY TO FIGURE OUT THE 8-SOU AND THE 6-MAN...
THERE'S NOTHING MYSTERIOUS ABOUT IT

?
THINK OF IT LIKE THEY'RE ALL WRAPPED UP.
BECAUSE NANGOU AND OGAMI ARE WORKING TOGETHER THEY'RE PASSING INFORMATION OF THAT TYPE BACK AND FORTH TO EACH OTHER WITH SIMPLE SIGNS
PROBABLY WHEN THEY GOT THEIR STARTING HANDS OGAMI AND NANGOU HAD FAIRLY BIASED HAND SHAPES
LOTS OF THOSE MANZU TILES
THE KEY IS THE MANZU TILES!
IN FACT, THAT WAS EXACTLY RIGHT! NANGOU HAD 8 AND OGAMI HAD 6
THAT WAS THE MIRACULOUS LEVEL OF AKAGI'S UNDERSTANDING
I ESTIMATE EACH OF THEM HAS SIX OR SEVEN, MAKING IT ABOUT THIRTEEN TILES BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM!

CLEARLY SHOWING A ONE-SUIT HAND.
WASHIO'S DISCARDS ARE
IS ALSO ACTING AS A SUPPORT.
THIS PUIS
THERE'S TWO IN THE DISCARDS AS WELL.
ACROSS FROM TEN
.....
.....
SO THERE'S ABOUT 9 MIXED INTO HIS HAND TOO.
THERE ARE 12 MANZU TILES LEFT...!
WITHIN FOUR TURNS, YOU END UP SEEING THE LOCATION OF ABOUT 24 MANZU TILES.
ADDING ALL OF THIS TOGETHER

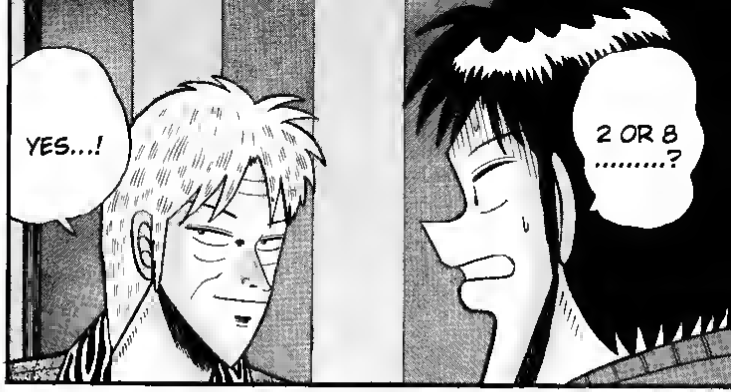
CHANCES ARE THAT TEN HAS LESS THAN TWO
SO ASSIGNING THE REMAINING MANZU TILES TO THOSE
AND SINCE THE WALL REMAINING AFTER THOSE THREE TURNS INCLUDING THE TILES IN THE DEAD WALL, IS 69 TILES
TEN'S HAND IS 13 TILES
THE WALL HAS ABOUT 5 5 TIMES MORE

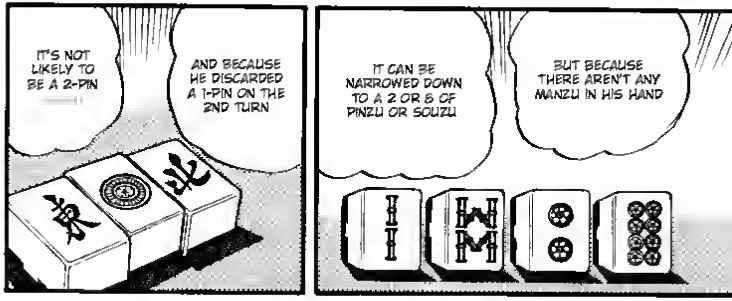

IT'S REASONABLE TO THINK THAN TEN HAS A LOWER THAN AVERAGE NUMBER IN HIS HAND
BUT... WHEN YOU CONSIDER HOW MANY ARE IN OTHER PLAYERS' HANDS
IN SHORT, HE HAS ONE OR ZERO...!

THIS PROVED CORRECT, BUT.....
IN THE END, OGAMI FIGURED THAT THERE WERE ZERO MANZU TILES IN TEN'S HAND.
THIS IS HARDLY A GODLIKE SKILL, RATHER, IT'S AN ORDINARY PREDICTION...

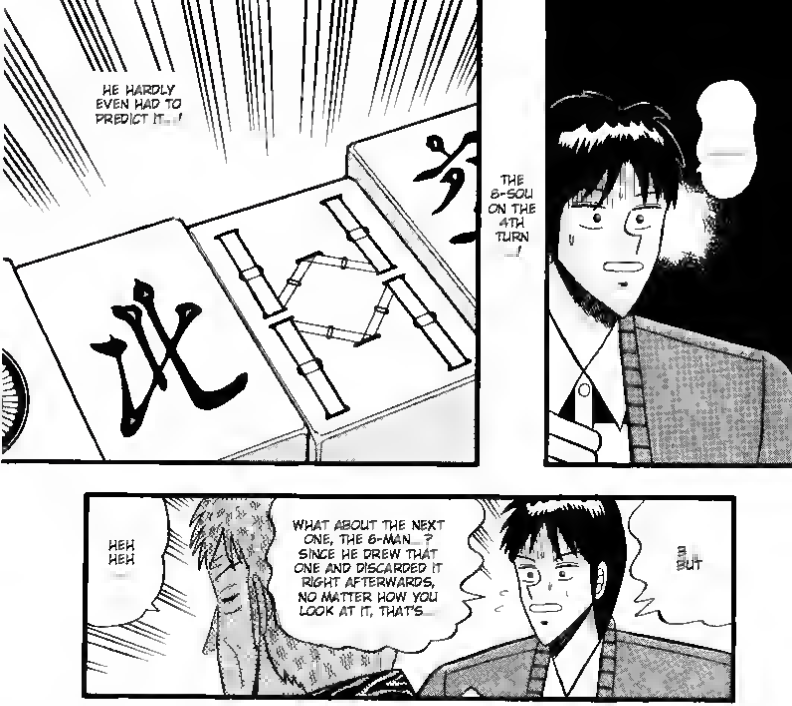
.....

AND IN FACT, THAT'S WHAT TEN'S HAND WAS DOING, TOO.
IT WILL DEVELOP OUT SIDEWAYS
IT'S EASY TO CONCLUDE WHAT THIS HAND WILL DO.
IF HE DOESN'T HAVE ANY MANZU, THERE'S ONLY PINZU AND SOUZU IN HIS HAND.
THE NEXT ONE THAT CAME OUT AFTER THAT WAS A TILE ON THE END, BUT...
東
北
HE IMMEDIATELY TOOK CARE OF THE TILES HE DIDN'T NEED WITHIN THREE TURNS
IT WOULD HAVE TO BE SOME OTHER TILE ON THE END
.....
BUT IF A 1 OR 9 WAS GOING TO COME OUT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BEFORE THE PEI

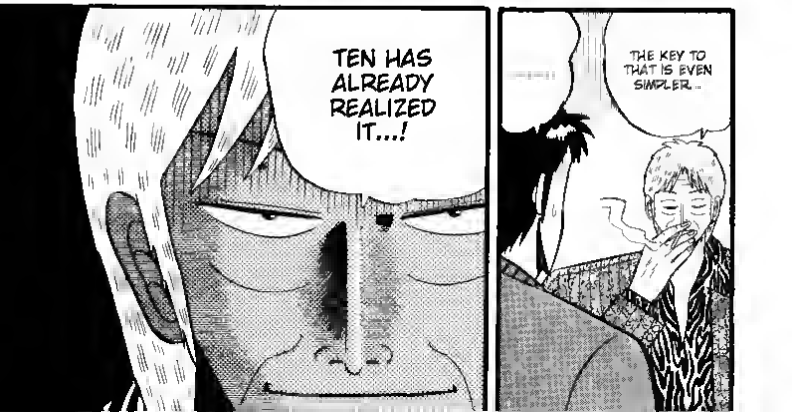

YES...!
2 OR 8 .....?


IT'S NOT LIKELY TO BE A 2-PIN
AND BECAUSE HE DISCARDED A 1-PIN ON THE 2ND TURN
IT CAN BE NARROWED DOWN TO A 2 OR 8 OF PINZU OR SOUZU
BUT BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY MANZU IN HIS HAND

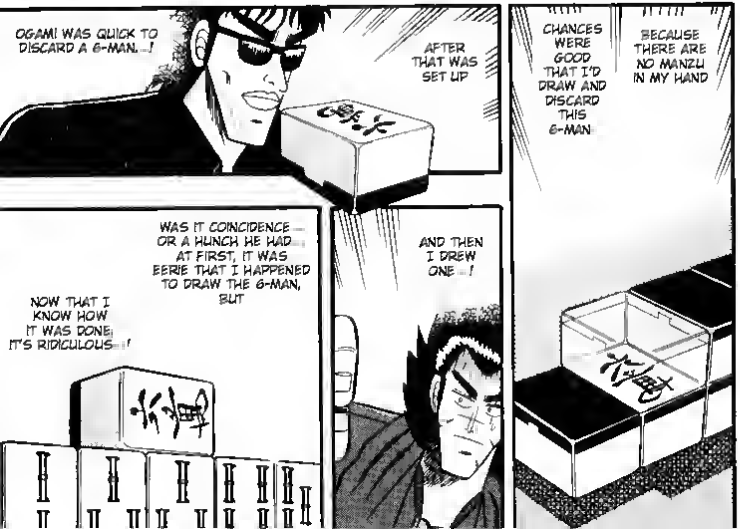
8-SOU OR 8-PIN.....?
WHICH MEANS THAT IT'S
SO THE CHANCES OF IT BEING A 2-SOU ARE LOW
TWO OF THEM ARE IN THE DISCARDS

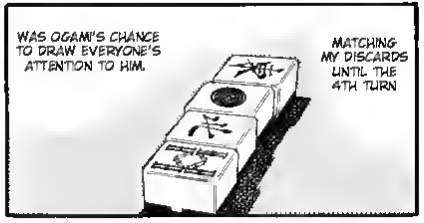

HE HARDLY EVEN HAD TO PREDICT IT...!
THE 8-SOU ON THE 4TH TURN...!

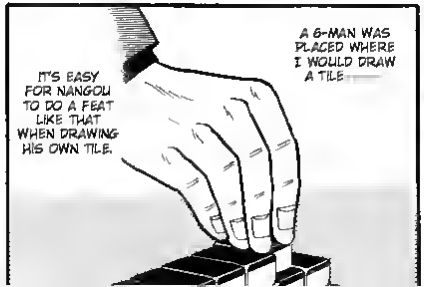
HEH HEH
WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT ONE, THE 6-MAN...? SINCE HE DREW THAT ONE AND DISCARDED IT RIGHT AFTERWARDS, NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, THAT'S...
B-BUT


TEN HAS ALREADY REALIZED IT...!
THE KEY TO THAT IS EVEN SIMPLER...

ざわ
.....


OGAMI WAS QUICK TO DISCARD A 6-MAN...!
AFTER THAT WAS SET UP
BECAUSE THERE ARE NO MANZU IN MY HAND
CHANCES WERE GOOD THAT I'D DRAW AND DISCARD THIS 6-MAN
WAS IT COINCIDENCE OR A HUNCH HE HAD AT FIRST, IT WAS EERIE THAT I HAPPENED TO DRAW THE 6-MAN, BUT
AND THEN I DREW ONE...!
NOW THAT I KNOW HOW IT WAS DONE, IT'S RIDICULOUS...!


WAS OGAMI'S CHANCE TO DRAW EVERYONE'S ATTENTION TO HIM.
MATCHING MY DISCARDS UNTIL THE 4TH TURN


IT'S EASY FOR NANGOU TO DO A FEAT LIKE THAT WHEN DRAWING HIS OWN TILE.
A 6-MAN WAS PLACED WHERE I WOULD DRAW A TILE

IT'S NANGOU .....!

IT'S A COOPERATIVE PLAY BETWEEN OGAMI AND NANGOU.
A STRATEGY THAT I WALKED RIGHT INTO.....

PON.
7TH TURN

OGAMI CALLED PON ON HIS OWN WIND, THE DORA

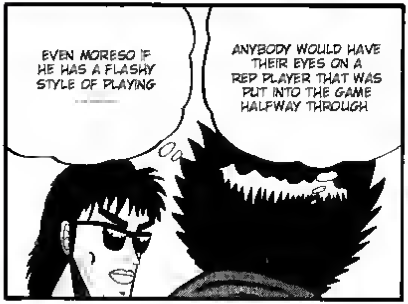
PRETTY MUCH NOBODY WOULD SIT AROUND CONSIDERING ANY YAKU PAST THAT.
FANPAI AND 3 DORA IS THE HIGHEST PROBABILITY.
CHANCES OF THAT ARE LOW
IT SEEMS A BIT LIKE HON-ITSU FROM HIS DISCARDS BUT
HE'S PROBABLY HOLDING A CHUN OR SOMETHING AND PLANNING TO RUN WITH THAT.
PON ON THE DORA, HUH.....
ドシッ
HE'S IN II-SHAN-TEN
IF THAT'S THE CASE, HIS HAND WILL BE FAST.
OR MAYBE EVEN TENPAI.
AT THAT TIME OGAMI'S HAND WAS.....!
BUT

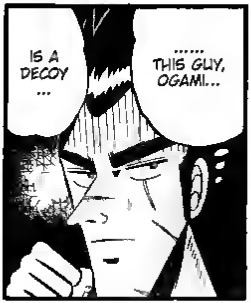
A MESS...!
PON
發 中 一萬 二萬 伍萬 伍萬 六萬 白 西 西
ACTING LIKE IT WAS FANPAI, 3 DORA .....!
WITH ONE PLAYER HOLDING FANPAI .....
IT FORCED HIM TO PLAY AROUND THAT HAND...!
LIKE HE WAS THROWING AWAY HIS CHANCE TO WIN FROM THE START.....!
KEEPING THE 2-SOU AND 3-PIN, HE DISCARDED THE 2-MAN
二萬
INSTEAD, HE HELD ONTO AS MANY FANPAI AS HE COULD...
發 中 一萬
NOT IN ANY SHAPE TO GO FOR A WIN.....!

HOLDING BACK OTHER PLAYERS WITH A HAND OF NOTHING.
15TH TURN
IN THE END, THE PERSON WITH AN ADVANTAGE WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO KNEW THAT, NANGOU FROM WEST...
TSUMO...

MANGAN .....!
SAN-SHOKU, TAN-YAO, TSUMO.
ざわ
ざわ..
..... I SEE .....

WEST'S METHOD ……!
……I'VE FIGURED IT OUT.

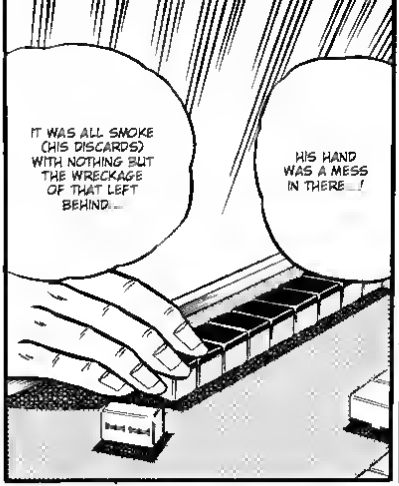

EVEN MORESO IF HE HAS A FLASHY STYLE OF PLAYING
ANYBODY WOULD HAVE THEIR EYES ON A RED PLAYER THAT WAS PUT INTO THE GAME HALFWAY THROUGH

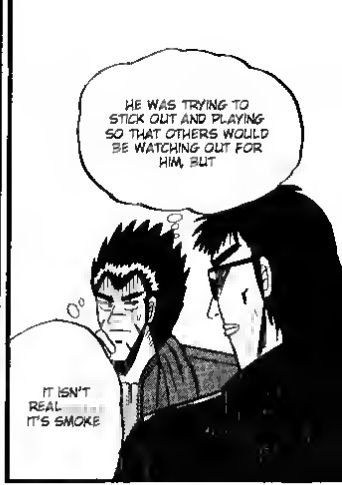

IS A DECOY …
…… THIS GUY, OGAMI…

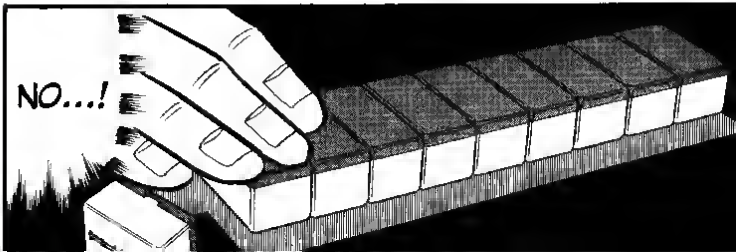
ジャラ・
PROBABLY ; THAT HAND THAT REEKED OF HON-ITSU

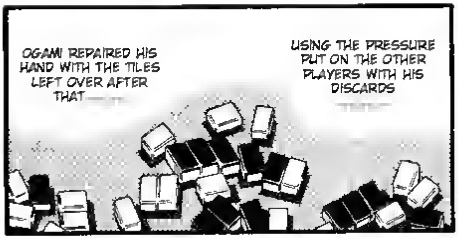
IT'S A TYPE OF FEINT.
USING THAT WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY NANGOU WENT ON TO WIN
ガシャ・・

ガシャ!
WAS A NOTHING HAND.....!
I KNEW IT.....!
コロ...
IT'S SMOKE ...!
IF HIS HAND WAS REALLY HEADING TOWARDS A HON-ITSU MANZU ONE, THERE'S NO WAY HE'D HANG ON TO A TILE LIKE THAT FOR SO LONG...
.....


IT WAS ALL SMOKE (HIS DISCARDS) WITH NOTHING BUT THE WRECKAGE OF THAT LEFT BEHIND...
HIS HAND WAS A MESS IN THERE...!


HE WAS TRYING TO STICK OUT AND PLAYING SO THAT OTHERS WOULD BE WATCHING OUT FOR HIM, BUT
IT ISN'T REAL... IT'S SMOKE


NO...!


OGAMI REPAIRED HIS HAND WITH THE TILES LEFT OVER AFTER THAT——
USING THE PRESSURE PUT ON THE OTHER PLAYERS WITH HIS DISCARDS——

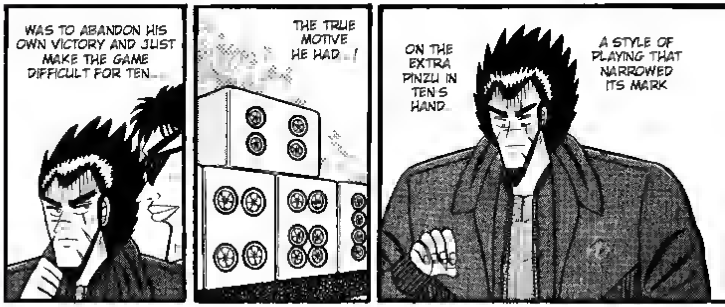
ALL TEN COULD SEE RIGHT NOW WAS THE SMOKE!

HE'LL GET STABBED
HEH HEH
IT'S GOING LIKE I THOUGHT IT WOULD
YOU MIGHT REALIZE AFTER BEING SERIOUSLY INJURED.....
IF YOU PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO OGAMI'S SMOKE, YOU'RE GOING TO GET HURT.
IN OGAMI'S SMOKE ...!
THE HIDDEN BLADE

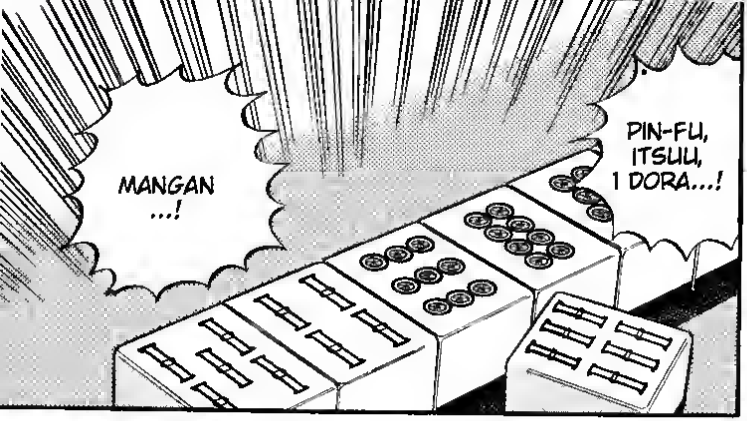
CHAPTER 53
SQUEEZED INTO A CORNER

ざわ
ざわ
TEN VS. OGAMI
OGAMI KATSURA.
AN ASSASSIN FROM WEST SHOWED UP TO PREVENT THAT.
BUT...
HE PLAYED A GAME OF MAHJONG THAT TWISTED AROUND TEN.
FROM THE EAST 1ST ROUND ONWARD
BUT HE COULDN'T DO THAT ANY MORE.
TEN HAD KEPT GIVING CHANCES TO HIS FRIENDS SO FAR.
HE HAD TO WIN NOW.
THERE ARE TWO SEATS LEFT FOR THE SHOWDOWN.

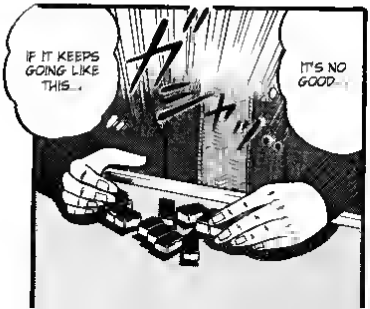
AT A QUICK GLANCE, SHOW A PINZU ONE-SUIT HAND...!
FOR INSTANCE, THESE DISCARDS


WAS TO ABANDON HIS OWN VICTORY AND JUST MAKE THE GAME DIFFICULT FOR TEN...
THE TRUE MOTIVE HE HAD...!
ON THE EXTRA PINZU IN TEN'S HAND.
A STYLE OF PLAYING THAT NARROWED ITS MARK

TSUMO!
DUE TO THAT, TEN WAS A HALF STEP TOO SLOW.
SHIT...!

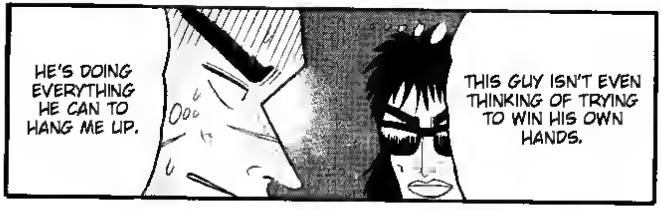

MANGAN ...!
PIN-FU, ITSUU, 1 DORA...!

TSUMO... CHIN-ITSU ...!


IF IT KEEPS GOING LIKE THIS...
IT'S NO GOOD...

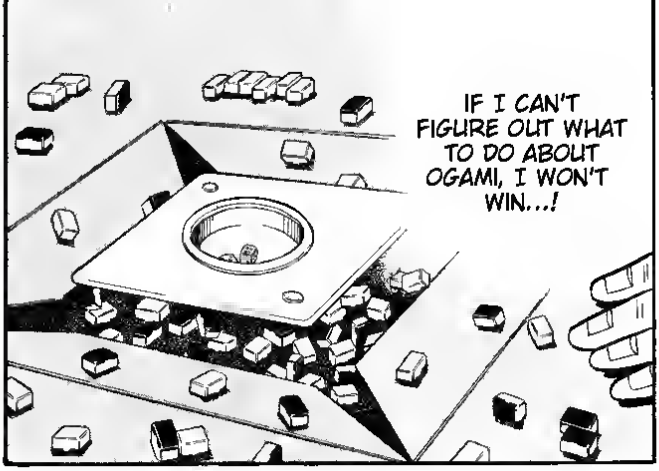
IN THE END THE OTHER TWO PLAYERS PICKED UP WINNING HANDS

AT THIS RATE OGAMI'S GOING TO TAKE ME DOWN WITH HIM...!


HE'S DOING EVERYTHING HE CAN TO HANG ME UP.
THIS GUY ISN'T EVEN THINKING OF TRYING TO WIN HIS OWN HANDS.

IN OTHER WORDS
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN WIN AGAINST THE OTHER TWO BY SPEED.

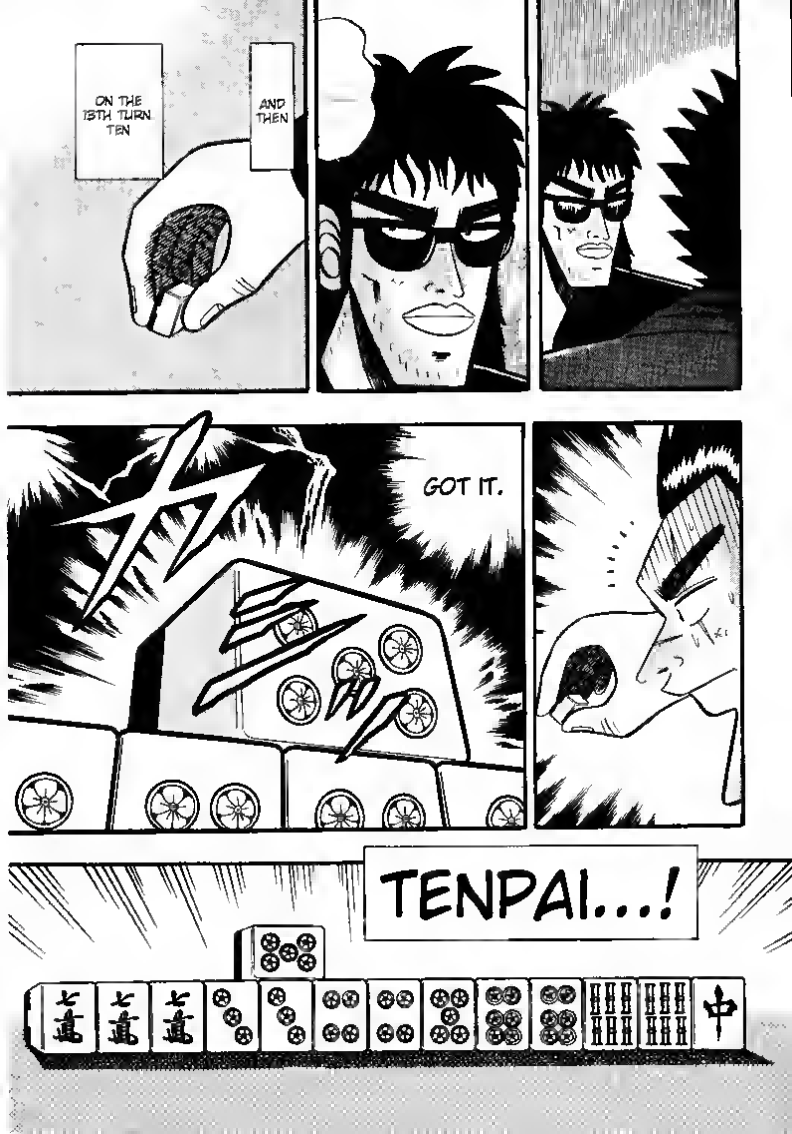
I'M THE ONLY ONE THAT'S GOT OGAMI DRAGGING ME DOWN LIKE A LEAD WEIGHT.
THE OTHER TWO ARE OUT THERE SWIMMING FREELY.


IF I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ABOUT OGAMI, I WON'T WIN...!

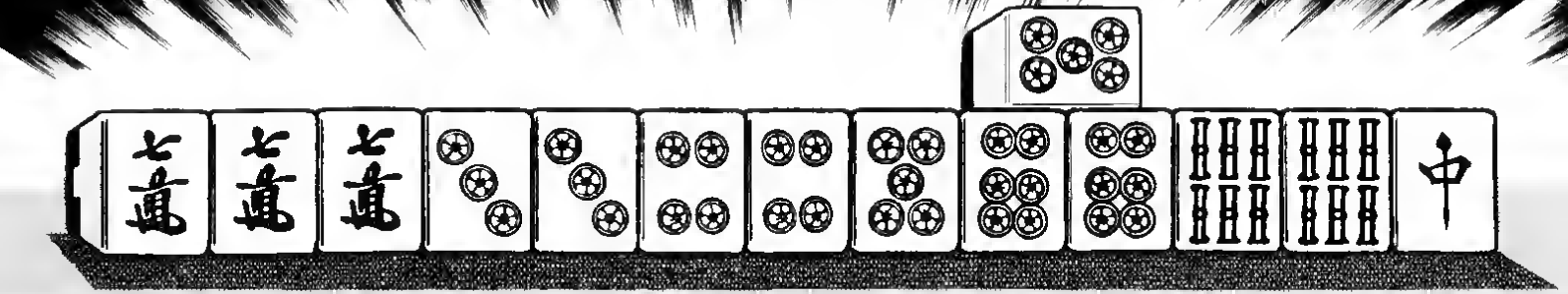
EAST 4TH ROUND
RIICHI ...!

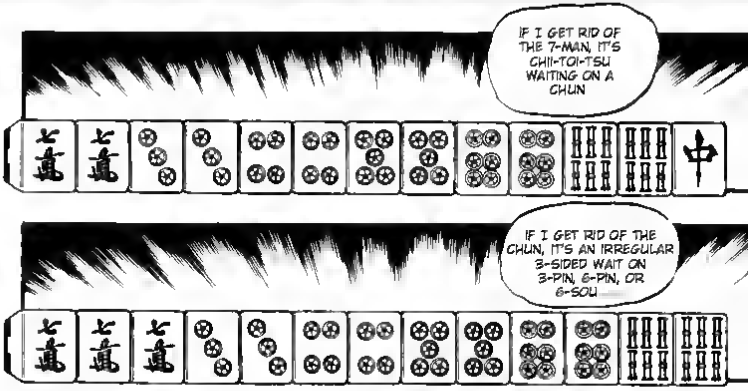
...OGAMI'S DISCARDS ARE TYPICAL OF A SOUZU CHIN-ITSU HAND.....
チラ...

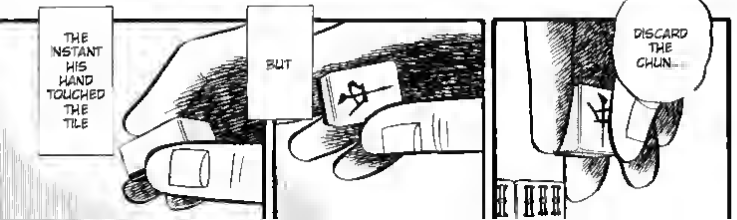
IT'S A SAFE TILE TOWARDS NANGOU...
IT MAKES IT HARD FOR ME TO DISCARD IN THAT AREA BUT...
GET RID OF A SOUZU...!
STOP PAYING ATTENTION TO OGAMI ...!
...ALL RIGHT.. IT'S TIME TO PUT A STOP TO THIS...
I HAVE TO IGNORE OGAMI THIS ROUND...
RESULTS IN AN ADVANTAGE TO NANGOU ...!
HAVING TO DISCARD FROM THIS AREA WHEN MY HAND WAS JUST STARTING TO TAKE SHAPE


ON THE 13TH TURN TEN
AND THEN
GOT IT.
TENPAI...!

TEN'S DECISION: DISCARD THE 7-MAN...? OR DISCARD THE CHUN...?

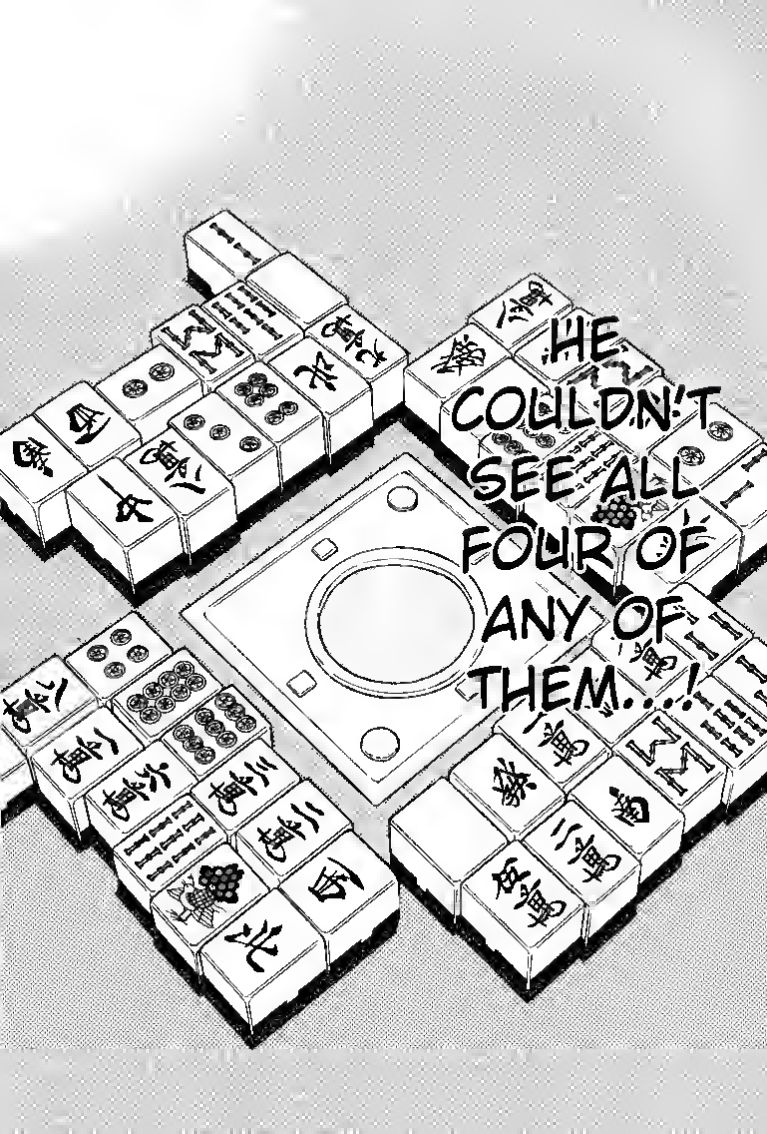



IF I GET RID OF THE 7-MAN, IT'S CHII-TOI-TSU WAITING ON A CHUN
IF I GET RID OF THE CHUN, IT'S AN IRREGULAR 3-SIDED WAIT ON 3-PIN, 6-PIN, OR 6-SOU...

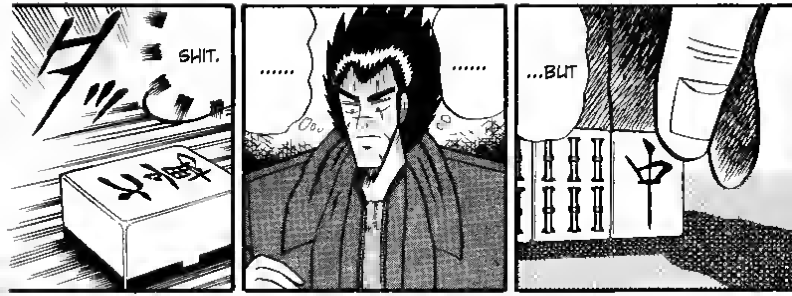


A SUDDEN JOLT RAN THROUGH TEN...!

HE GOT A COLD FEELING WHEN HE LOOKED AT THE DISCARDS.
...
AT FIRST HE COULDN'T PUT IT INTO WORDS...
AN OMINOUS FEELING.
LOOKING FOR ALL FOUR OF THE 1, 9, OR WORD TILES IN THE DISCARDS...
EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE IN THE 13TH TURN, CLOSE TO THE END OF THE ROUND
IN SHORT
AFTER A MOMENT, HE COULD PUT WORDS TO IT...


HE COULDN'T SEE ALL FOUR OF ANY OF THEM...!

COULD HE REALLY ...?

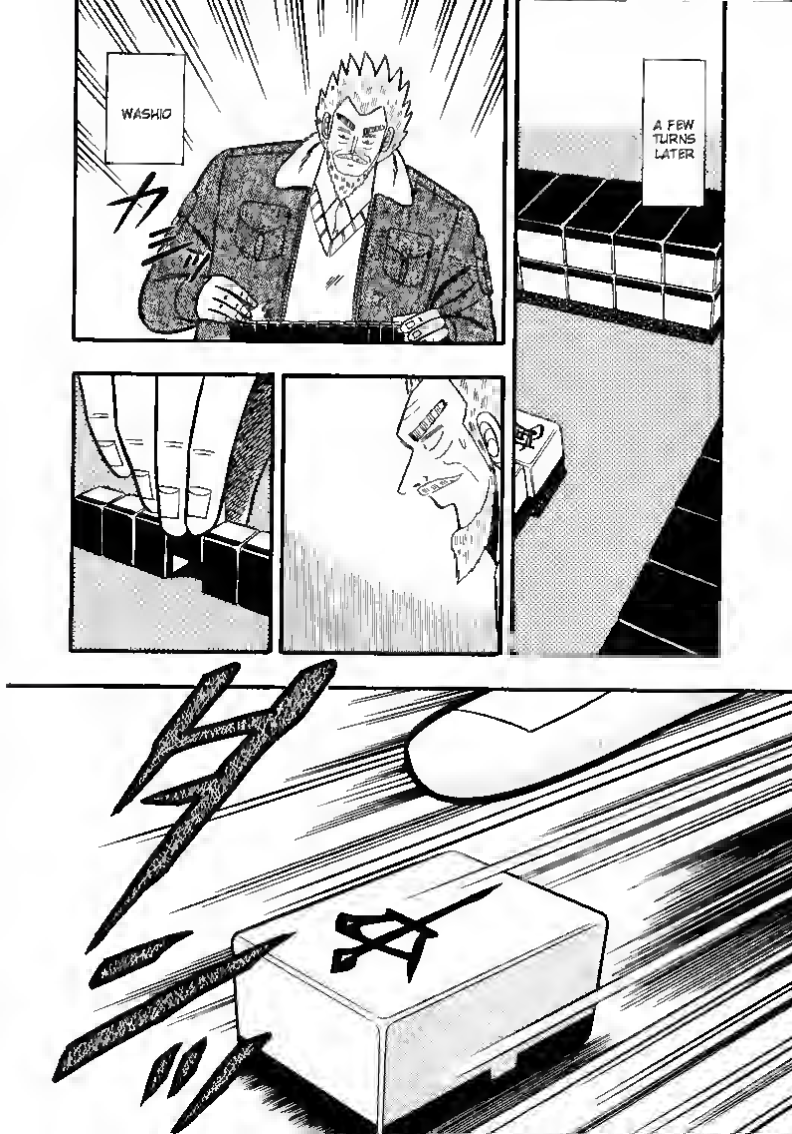

SHIT.
.....
.....
...BUT

...
HA
AND GOT RID OF THE 7-MAN.
TEN-- CHANGED HIS DISCARD AT THE LAST MOMENT--!

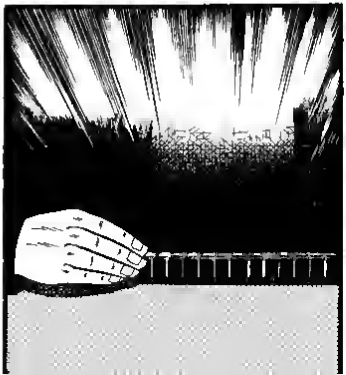
ざわ…
……
ざわ…
AND SO HE STOPPED WHEN HE GOT WIND OF THAT..
A CERTAIN UNNATURAL DISTORTION ...
A DISSONANCE HE SAW IN THE DISCARDS...
WHAT MADE TEN NOT DISCARD THE CHUN WAS
THAT OGAMI'S HAND WAS...
IT WAS A PAPER-THIN CHANCE ...!

KOKUSHI MUSOU

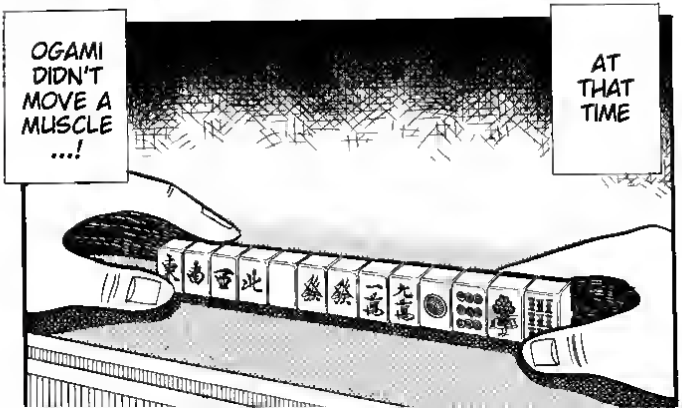
AND TEN'S THROAT WOULD HAVE BEEN TORN OUT...
A FEW CENTIMETERS FURTHER...
...JUST NOW... OGAMI'S BLADE JUST GRAZED THE TIP OF HIS NOSE...
THAT TEN...!
HE'S GOT THE LUCK OF THE DEVIL...
SHIT...
ざわ
ざわ
.....
WAITING ON A CHUN...!


WASHIO
カミ
A FEW TURNS LATER

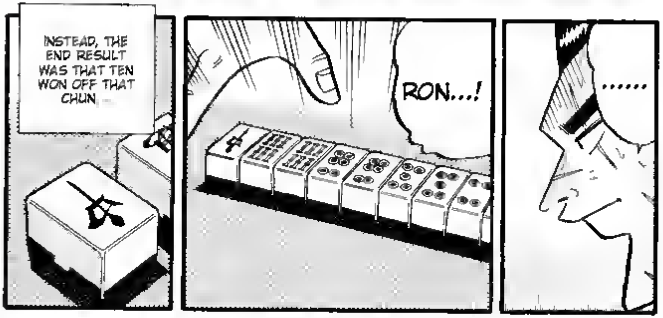
KOKUSHI
?
DOO
THERE IT IS...!



DIDN'T MOVE...!
OGAMI...


OGAMI DIDN'T MOVE A MUSCLE ...!
AT THAT TIME

ざわ..
.....


INSTEAD, THE END RESULT WAS THAT TEN WON OFF THAT CHUN
RON...!
.....

I SEE
OGAMI WAS SIMPLY SILENT
MEAN-WHILE

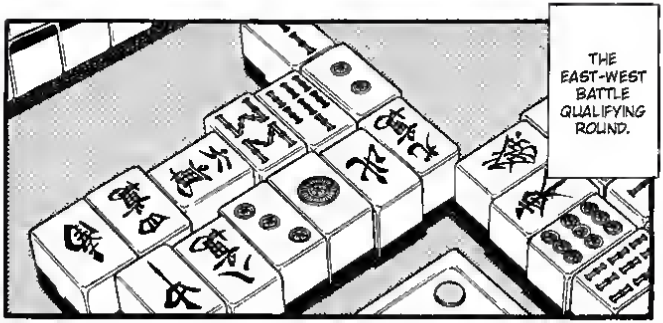
EVEN WHEN IT'S A SURE WIN HE ABANDONS WHAT WOULD BENEFIT HIMSELF...
IT'S A FACADE EVEN TEN CAN'T READ
IT DOESN'T EVEN FEEL HUMAN...
I HEARD HE WAS A REAL PRO WHO IGNORED EVERYTHING BEYOND FOLLOWING HIS MISSION, BUT...
OGAMI...
GOING THIS FAR IS REALLY SOMETHING
...THAT WAS...
AND I ONLY GAVE HIM ONE ORDER
HE'S LIKE A MACHINE THAT DOESN'T DO ANYTHING EXCEPT FOLLOW ORDERS...
TAKE OUT TEN...!

JUST ... THINK ONLY ABOUT TEN...

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE OTHERS.

AND TAKE HIM DOWN...!

CHAPTER 54
TENACIOUS DISCARDING OF A CLOSED TRIPLE


THE EAST-WEST BATTLE QUALIFYING ROUND.

TSUMO!
HE WAS REVIVED!

AFTER WINNING IN THE EAST 4TH ROUND WITH CHII-TOI-TSU

BUT
AT FIRST, TEN HAD TO FIGHT AGAINST THE WAY OGAMI WAS DRAGGING HIM DOWN

HE'D CAUGHT UP WITH NANGOU AND WASHIO
IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE...

PIN-FU, TSUMO, ITSUU...! MANGAN!
INTO HIS 4TH ROUND AS DEALER

WHEN THE EAST 4TH ROUND WAS OVER, THREE PEOPLE HAD AROUND THE SAME NUMBER OF POINTS...!
NANGOU (1ST) 32900
WASHIO (3RD) 31800
TEN (2ND PLACE) 32100

OGAMI WAS AN INCH AWAY FROM RUNNING OUT OF POINTS, AT A MERE 3200
THE ONLY ONE LEFT BEHIND WAS OGAMI

KAN.
BUT IN THE SOUTH 1ST ROUND

KAN!

OGAMI WENT ON THE OFFENSIVE

TWO KAN GROUPS SIGNALLED SOMETHING STRANGE WAS GOING ON...
中
中
北
北
ざわ。
ダンッ
JUST WHEN I THINK HE'S SETTLED DOWN FOR A SIT
...THIS GUY.
HE COMES UP WITH SOMETHING NEW AGAIN .....
IS HE BLUFFING AGAIN...?
OR HAS HE REALLY GOT A GOOD HAND...?

HE'S THE ONLY PERSON I CAN'T READ...!

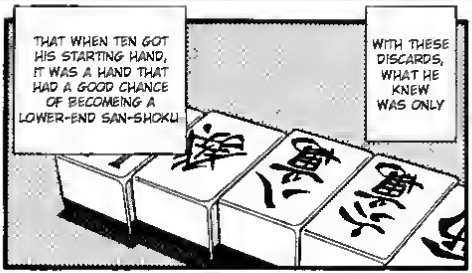
IN TERMS OF POINTS, TEN, ALONG WITH WASHIO AND NANGOU
FOR THE FIRST TIME THIS HAN-CHAN

WHO WAS PSYCHOL-OGICALLY OVERWHELMING THE OTHER PLAYERS.
BUT THE REALITY WAS THAT THE PERSON IN THE LEAD DURING THIS HAN-CHAN WAS OGAMI
WAS OVER-WHELMING OGAMI.

TEN COULDN'T SEE OGAMI'S TRUE NATURE.
THE NUMBER-ONE CAUSE OF THIS WAS THAT OGAMI HAD DISAPPEARED BACK INTO THE SMOKE.
TEN COULDN'T NARROW DOWN WHAT OGAMI'S HAND WAS...
FOR INSTANCE, WITH THIS DISCARD PILE AND TWO GROUPS LAID OPEN
ON THE OTHER HAND, OGAMI KNEW TEN ALL TOO WELL.

ON THE 5TH TURN, HE DISCARDS THE 4-SOU.
OGAMI KNEW EVERYTHING THAT WAS IN TEN'S HAND...
WITH THIS DISCARD OF THE 4-SOU
JUN-CHAN WITH A LOWER SAN-SHOKU—!
99% CERTAINLY
TEN'S HAND WAS

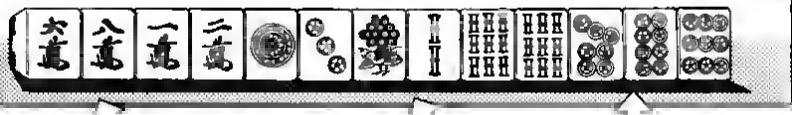
IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE THAT MUCH!
BUT... NORMALLY WITH THESE DISCARDS
THESE DISCARDS ARE CONNECTED TO A QUICK TAN-YAO SAN-SHOKU UND
IT WOULD BE REASONABLE TO THINK THAT
INSTEAD...
HE WOULD AT LEAST WANT TO KEEP IT MORE THAN THE 4-SOU THAT HE JUST DROPPED
AND SO IT COULDN'T BE JUN-CHAN.
IF HE WAS AIMING FOR JUN-CHAN— IF HE ONLY HAD THE 8-MAN. CONSIDERING THAT HE COULD DRAW THE 7-MAN OR 9-MAN. HE'D WANT TO HANG ON TO IT FOR A LITTLE WHILE
KEEP
BUT THEN WHY WAS HE SO QUICK TO GET RID OF THE 8-MAN THE DORA—


THAT WHEN TEN GOT HIS STARTING HAND, IT WAS A HAND THAT HAD A GOOD CHANCE OF BECOMING A LOWER-END SAN-SHOKU

WITH THESE DISCARDS, WHAT HE KNEW WAS ONLY

BUT OGAMI DIDN'T EVEN BOTHER TO CONSIDER THAT!
HE HAD IT FIGURED OUT THAT FAR...!

HE REASONED THAT THE STARTING HAND WAS IN THIS SHAPE.



FROM THE BEGINNING, HE DIDN'T NEED THIS GROUP.

SO THERE ARE ALREADY FOUR GROUPS HE'S DECIDED ON.

PARTS ARE HEADING TOWARDS A LOWER SAN-SHOKU

ONE UPPER GROUP IS FINISHED

END

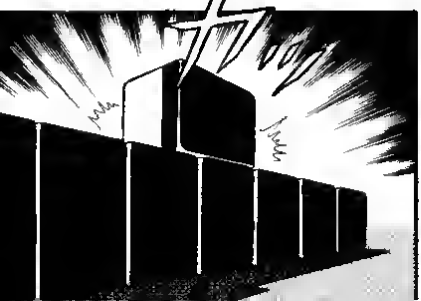
IT WAS TEN'S PLAYING STYLE TO USE IT AS A SMOKESCREEN TO ERASE THE SCENT OF CHANTA

SO HE WAS QUICK TO GET RID OF IT IN ADVANCE

THIS IS WHAT OGAMI DETECTED

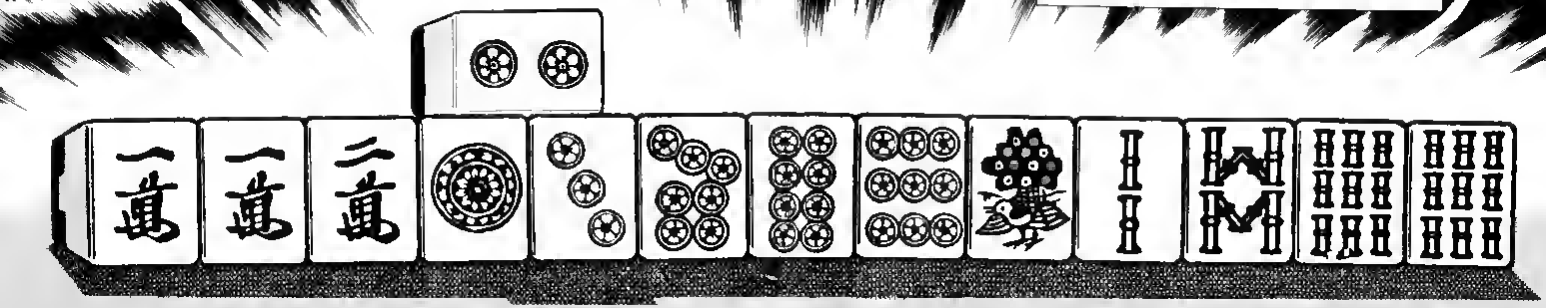
HE DIDN'T NEED THE 8-MAN

WHEN HE DIDN'T NEED TO PUT TOGETHER A 7-8-9-MAN GROUP



OGAMI: II-SHAN-TEN...!
THIS IS AN IDEAL TURN OF EVENTS FOR OGAMI...!
Oooo
THAT HE NEEDS FOR MAKING A LOWER SAN-SHOKU.
AND HE'S HOLDING TIGHT ON THREE OF TEN'S KEY TILE, THE 3-MAN...
TEN'S STRUGGLING...
...
II-SHAN-TEN FOR SUU-AN-KOU...!
IT TURNED INTO A STRONG HAND!

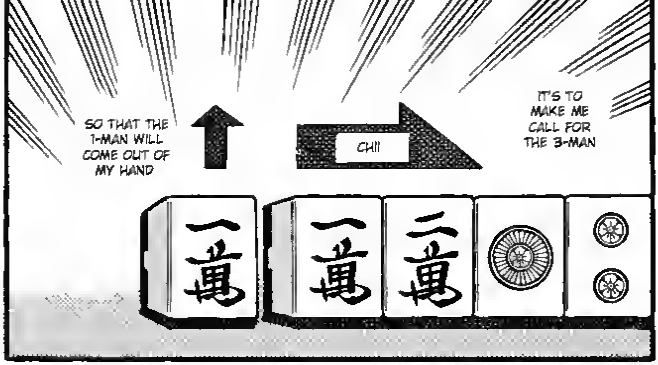
TEN: II-SHAN-TEN



THIS TIME, TEN FOLLOWED OGAMI INTO II-SHAN-TEN TOO.
IF FACT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT TEN HAD ZERO CHANCE OF WINNING
BUT— OGAMI HAD THREE OF HIS NEEDED 3-MAN, AND NANGOU HAD ONE

THAT'S CRAZY...
DISCARDING THE 3-MAN...!?

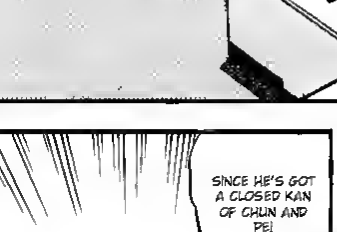
IF HE WASN'T CAREFUL, HE COULD HAVE DEALT INTO MY HAND WITH THAT 3-MAN KNOWING HIM, THE FACT THAT HE DARED TO BRING IT OUT MEANS...
OGAMI SHOULD HAVE NOTICED I'M MAKING A LOWER SAN-SHOKU...
WHY IS HE GETTING RID OF A DANGEROUS TILE LIKE THAT NOW...


SO THAT THE 1-MAN WILL COME OUT OF MY HAND
CHI!
IT'S TO MAKE ME CALL FOR THE 3-MAN

BUT ONCE AGAIN ON THE NEXT TURN OGAMI PLAYED THE 3-MAN.
OGAMI'S PLAN IS OBVIOUS...!
THAT 1-MAN WILL BE TO TAKE ME OUT...!

AND THEN, OGAMI, ONE MORE TURN LATER
NANGOU DID THE SAME, AS IF HE WAS MATCHING IT.

DISCARDED A FULL CLOSED TRIPLE OF THE 3-MAN...!


SINCE HE'S GOT A CLOSED KAN OF CHUN AND PE!

HE'S GOT QUITE A PLAYING STYLE GOING THERE...

THIS GUY...

THE DISCARDS ARE SHOWING A SOUZU HON-ITSU HAND, BUT...
GIVING UP ON THAT ON PURPOSE
THAT'D BE PRETTY CARELESS OF HIM!

IF HE'D KEPT THOSE 3-MAN TILES IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SAN-AN-KOU...

THAT'D BE STUPID...
IS HE JUST TRYING TO THROW ME INTO CONFUSION...?
THAT'S THE THING I'VE FALLEN FOR THE MOST SO FAR...
HAVE I EVEN HAD THE FEELING THAT HE'S BEEN TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER A HAND FROM THE START...?
BY GIVING UP ON A SAN-AN-KOU, I GUESS HIS HAND VALUE HAS GONE DOWN TO 2 HAN...?
EVEN IF OGAMI'S AIMING FOR IT
MAYBE EVEN ONLY CHUN...!
EVEN IF HE WAS KEEPING A SINGLE ONE IT WOULD BE A HELL WAIT
SINCE WASHIO'S DISCARDED ONE OF THE 1-MAN
IT'D JUST BE RECKLESS...!
AS IF HE'D PLAY MAHJONG LIKE THAT...!
CHII!

HIS MISTAKE WAS NOT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT HOW TENACIOUS OGAMI WAS.
BUT

TEN NOTICED OGAMI'S PLAN...
THIS TIME

RON...!

HUH...?

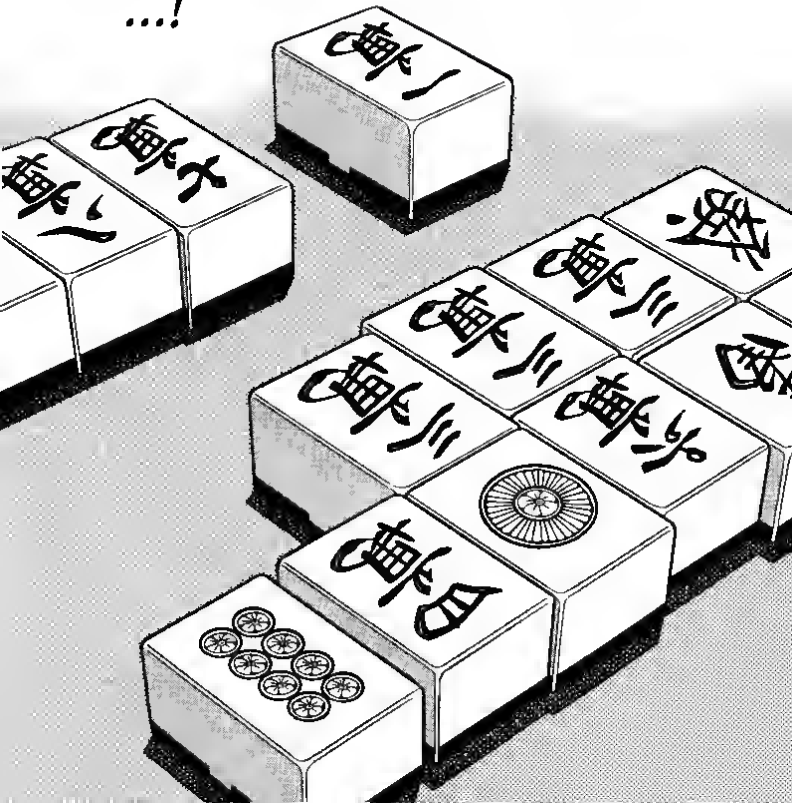
ハァ ハァ
ハァ..

OGAMI'S 1-MAN WAIT...!
HE HAD FOUR OF THE 9-MAN...
THAT'S CRAZY ...!

HE EVEN THREW HIS SUU-AN-KOU IN THE DITCH...!
IT WASN'T SAN-AN-KOU...!
HERESY TO DROP THE CLOSED TRIPLE OF THE 3-MAN
IT'S AN UNTHINK-ABLE WAY OF PLAYING
Ooo
HE THREW AWAY ONE OF HIS CLOSED TRIPLES FOR THE YAKUMAN TO FOOL ME INSTEAD
HE HELD ON TO IT...!
HE HAD THAT 1-MAN...
AS IF HE WAS HOLDING HIS BREATH IN THE SHADOWS

FIENDISHLY WAITNG FOR A PERSON TO FINALLY DIE

A SINGLE WAIT ON THE 1-MAN ...!



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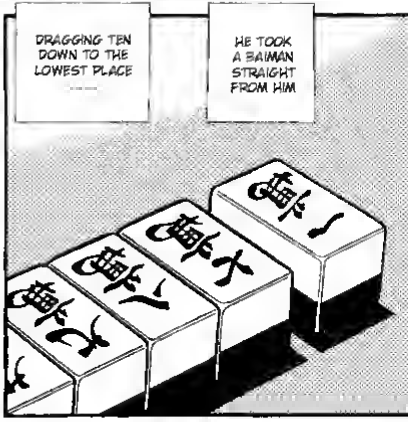
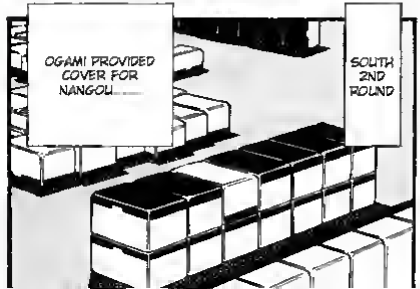
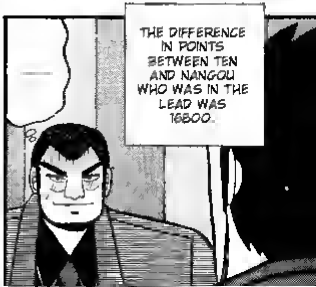
CHAPTER 55
THE DEMON THAT LIVES IN THE HEART

OGAMI'S PERSISTENCE IN TRYING TO TAKE OUT TEN FINALLY PAID OFF
SOUTH 1ST ROUND.

AT THIS TIME, THE POINTS OF ALL FOUR PLAYERS WERE.
NANGOU: (32800)
WASHIO: (31800)
OGAMI: (19200)
TEN: (16100)


DRAGGING TEN DOWN TO THE LOWEST PLACE
HE TOOK A BAIMAN STRAIGHT FROM HIM


OGAMI PROVIDED COVER FOR NANGOU.....
SOUTH 2ND ROUND


THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS BETWEEN TEN AND NANGOU WHO WAS IN THE LEAD WAS 16800.

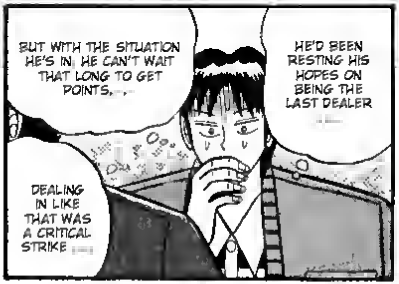
TSUMO.
MADE A BREAK FOR IT!
TAN-YAO, TSUMO, 1 DORA: 2000 ALL!
STILL, I DON'T UNDERSTAND
STILL
2 4 8 0 0
NOW THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS HAD OPENED FURTHER BETWEEN HIM AND TEN.
.....

IT'S POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO MAKE A COMEBACK WITH THIS DIFFERENCE IN POINTS
TEN WILL BE THE LAST DEALER...!
NOW'S THE TIME TO PERSEVERE...!
IT'S STILL OKAY
HE'S GOTTEN FORCED INTO A TOUGH BATTLE IN A WAY I NEVER WOULD HAVE IMAGINED BUT

IS FALLING RIGHT INTO OGAMI'S TRAP.
GETTING CAUGHT IN THAT WAY OF THINKING
HIRO...
YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU.
HEH HEH HEH

FOR TEN TO ACT DEFIANT AGAINST HIM
WHAT OGAMI'S AFRAID OF IS...
IS THE BEST POSITION TO TAKE TEN OUT FROM WHEN HE'S ALREADY INJURED AND STRUGGLING
WHEN THERE'S A FAIR DIFFERENCE IN POINTS AND HE'S RESTING ALL HIS HOPES ON BEING THE LAST DEALER, LIKE NOW
IF HE WANTS TO MAKE AN EXPLOSION IN THE LAST ROUND... HE'LL HAVE TO LIGHT THE FUSE FIRST.
YOU SAID THAT ALL HE HAS TO DO IS MAKE A COMEBACK IN THE LAST ROUND, BUT
HE WON'T CATCH THE FLOW LIKE THAT.
WITH HIM ON THE RUN RIGHT NOW IT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
HE DOESN'T HAVE A HOPE OF WINNING...!

RON...!
PLAYING DEFENSIVELY MADE HIM DEAL INTO EVEN MORE HANDS
JUST LIKE AKAGI GUESSED
IT WAS LIKE A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT, HOW HE DEALT IN, BUT.....
THIS HAND WAS A 3 DORA MANGAN.
OVER-WHELMING.....!
THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS BETWEEN HIM AND NANGOU IN THE LEAD WAS 49400.....!
WITH THAT, TEN'S POINTS DROPPED TO 1800 IN ONE BLOW


BUT WITH THE SITUATION HE'S IN, HE CAN'T WAIT THAT LONG TO GET POINTS...
HE'D BEEN RESTING HIS HOPES ON BEING THE LAST DEALER
DEALING IN LIKE THAT WAS A CRITICAL STRIKE...

IT'S HOPELESS...

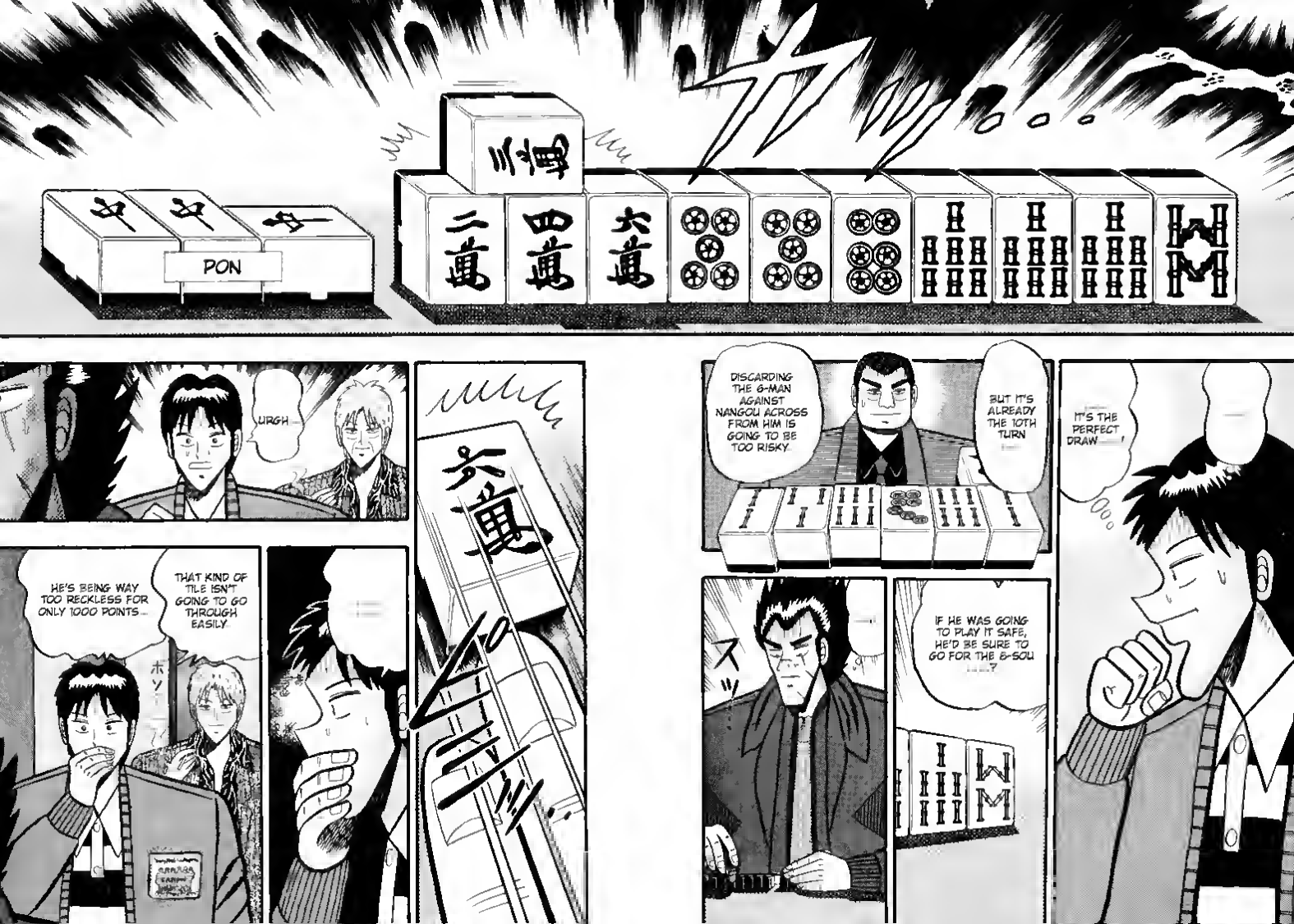
HUH?
TEN'S LUCK WILL GET BETTER.

GIVING HIM A CHANCE AT WINNING NOW...!
TEN'S LIT THE FUSE.....!

I GET THE FEELING THAT DEALING INTO THAT HAND OPENED HIS EYES
DON'T WORRY
?

PON!
SOUTH 2ND ROUND, DEALER'S 3RD ROUND
TEN MAKES A MOVE!
6TH TURN
IT'S BETTER FOR TEN THAT HE'S ALMOST OUT OF POINTS...
WHEN HE'S BEEN CHASD INTO A CORNER SO FAR, ALL HE CAN DO IS MAKE A RUN FOR IT NOW
.....
.....
HE'S LEFT HIS HESITATION BEHIND
.....

TEN'S HAND
ドン
二萬
四萬
六萬
北
URGH.
ムム
10TH TURN!
AND ONLY... THINKING ABOUT HIS OWN WIN.....
RIGHT NOW TEN IS IGNORING ALL DANGER OF DEALING IN
I SEE.....
.....
.....
北
EVEN IF IT IS THE CASE, HE'S NOT GOING TO PUT UP WITH HAVING TO EVADE HIM EVEN A LITTLE BIT.
IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE, LOOKING AT THE TABLE...
HONESTLY, IT WOULD BE BEST TO DISCARD PEI TO BE IN POSITION FOR THE BROADEST POSSIBLE WAIT BUT...
OBVIOUSLY PINZU ARE GOING TO BE HARD TO DEAL WITH...
FROM LOOKING AT OGAMI'S DISCARDS AND THE TILES HE'S CALLED ON
HE'D BETTER GET RID OF THE 5-PIN EARLY ON...
CHII


PON
URGH
HE'S BEING WAY TOO RECKLESS FOR ONLY 1000 POINTS...
THAT KIND OF TILE ISN'T GOING TO GO THROUGH EASILY
DISCARDING THE 6-MAN AGAINST NANGOU ACROSS FROM HIM IS GOING TO BE TOO RISKY
BUT IT'S ALREADY THE 10TH TURN
IF HE WAS GOING TO PLAY IT SAFE, HE'D BE SURE TO GO FOR THE 8-SOU ...?
IT'S THE PERFECT DRAW...

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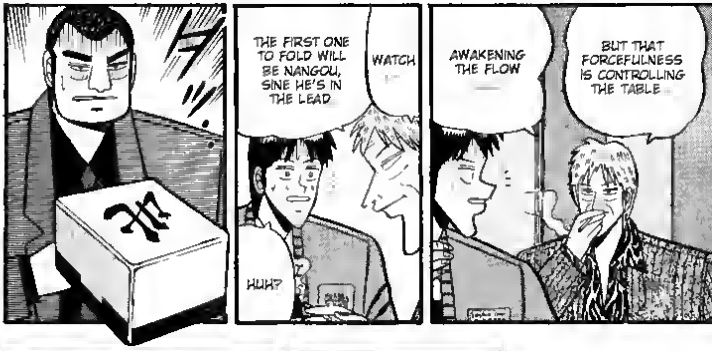
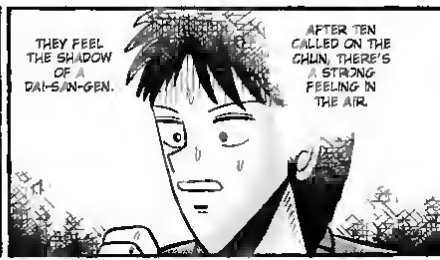

THE FIRST ONE TO FOLD WILL BE NANGOU, SINE HE'S IN THE LEAD.
WATCH.
HUH?
AWAKENING THE FLOW
BUT THAT FORCEFULNESS IS CONTROLLING THE TABLE

TAKE A CLOSE LOOK AT THE TABLE...
FOLDING AGAINST A 1000-POINT HAND...?
THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK WHEN YOU'RE WATCHING FROM BEHIND HIM.
HUUUUUH

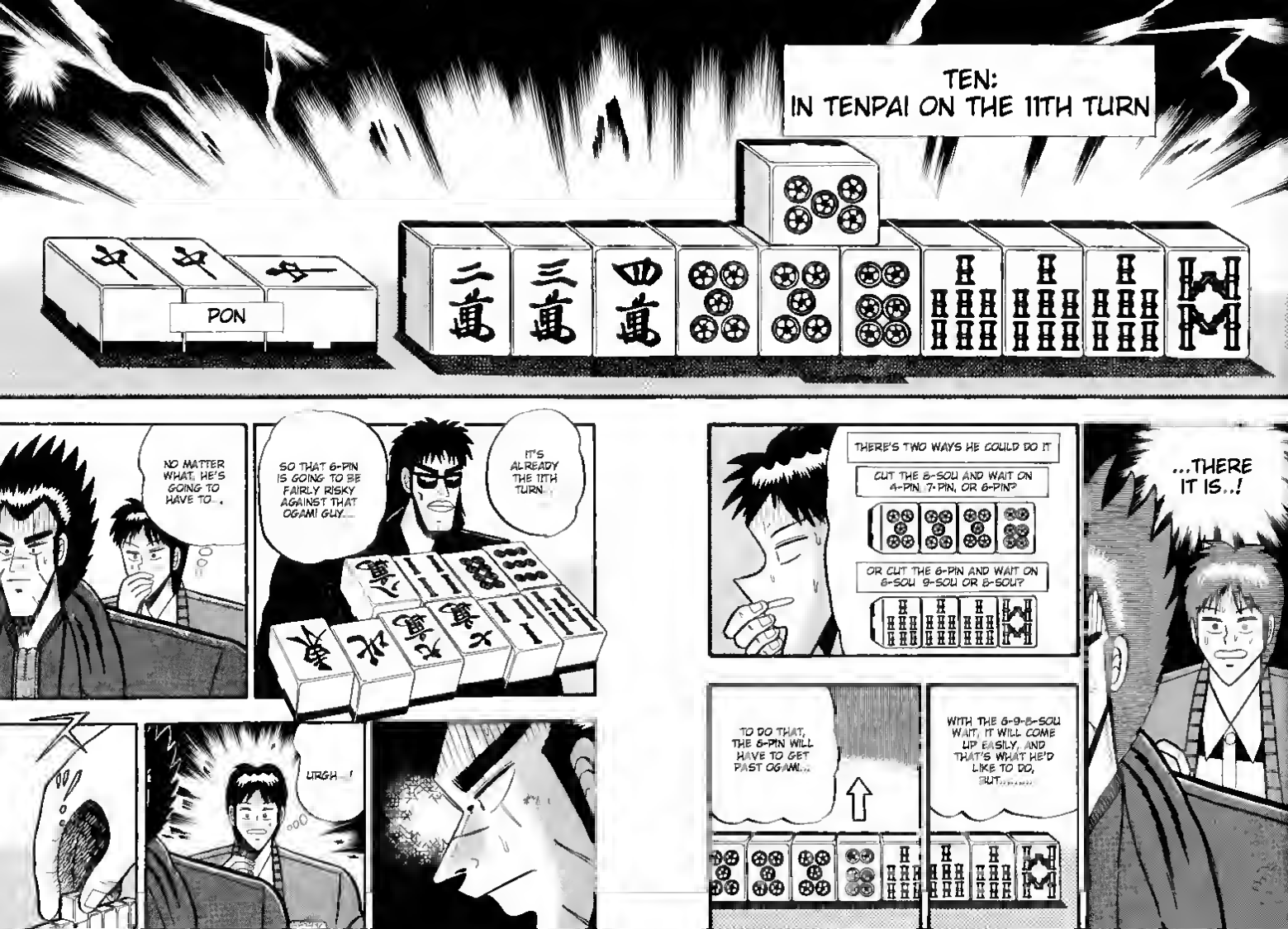
I CAN'T SEE A SINGLE HAKU OR HATSU.

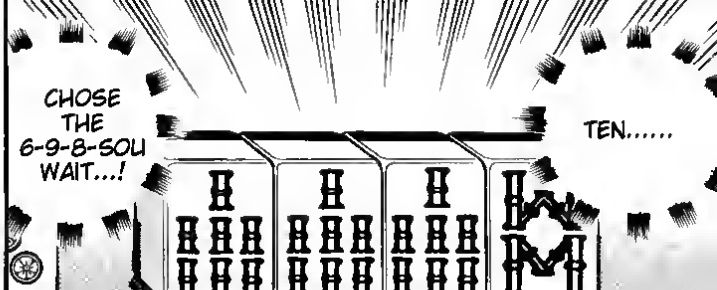
PON.


THEY FEEL THE SHADOW OF A DAI-SAN-GEN.
AFTER TEN CALLED ON THE CHUN, THERE'S A STRONG FEELING IN THE AIR.

THE PERSON WHO CAN CATCH HOLD OF THE FLOW WILL BE IN CONTROL OF THIS FACE-OFF.
.....HE STILL HASN'T GIVEN IN TO THE PRESSURE.

OGAMI'S THE ONLY ONE WHO ISN'T FOLDING!


TEN:
IN TENPAI ON THE 11TH TURN
PON
NO MATTER WHAT, HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO...
SO THAT 6-PIN IS GOING TO BE FAIRLY RISKY AGAINST THAT OGAMI GUY...
IT'S ALREADY THE 11TH TURN...!
URGH...!
THERE'S TWO WAYS HE COULD DO IT
CUT THE 8-SOU AND WAIT ON 4-PIN, 7-PIN, OR 6-PIN?
OR CUT THE 6-PIN AND WAIT ON 6-SOU 9-SOU OR 8-SOU?
TO DO THAT, THE 6-PIN WILL HAVE TO GET PAST OGAMI...
WITH THE 6-9-8-SOU WAIT, IT WILL COME UP EASILY, AND THAT'S WHAT HE'D LIKE TO DO, BUT.....
...THERE IT IS..!


CHOSE THE 6-9-8-SOU WAIT...!
TEN.....

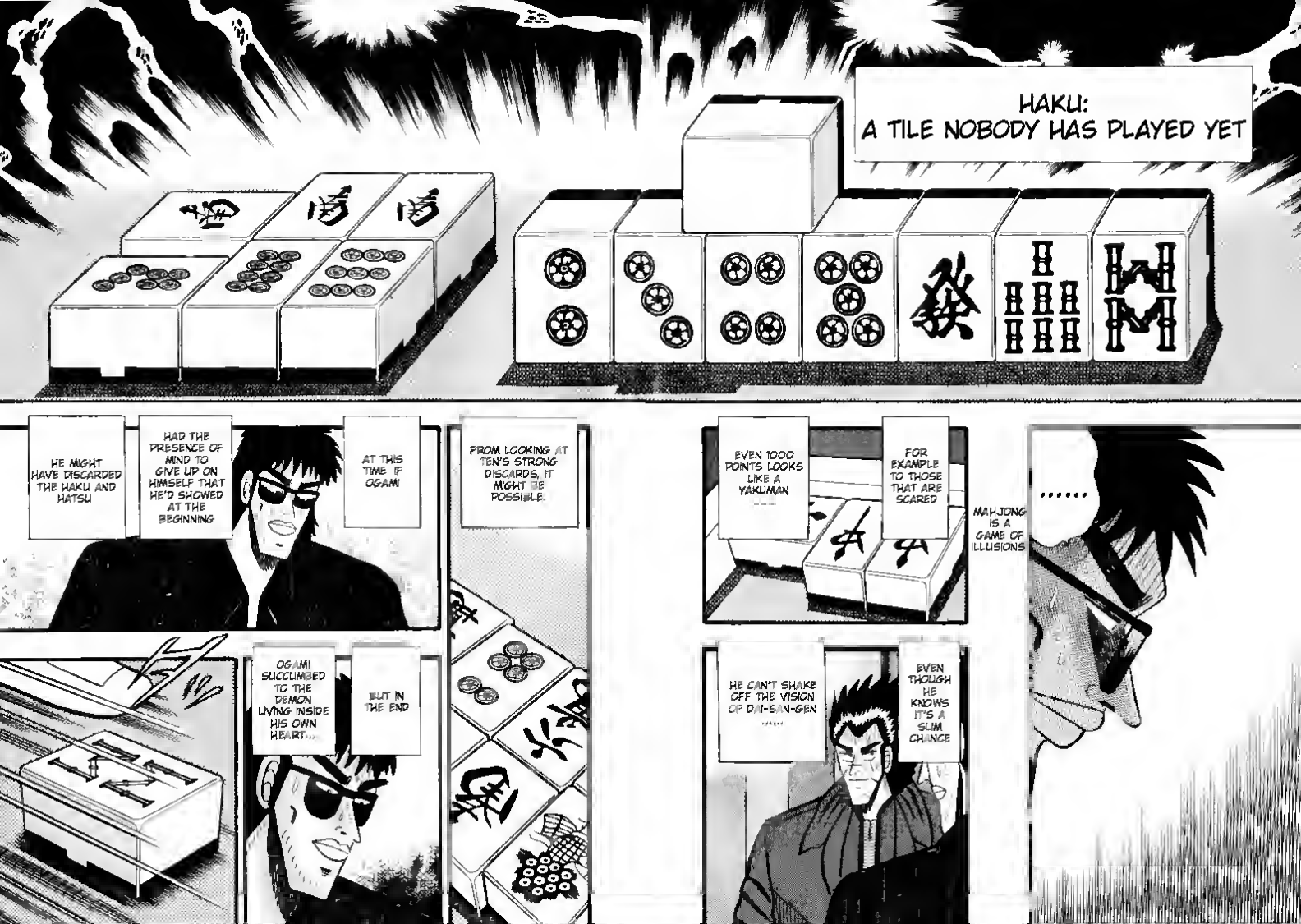
IF HE'S DEALT IN WITH THAT
BUT... WILL THAT 6-PIN GO THROUGH..?

URGH..!

SIGH...
IT WENT THROUGH!
HE HASN'T MOVED...!
AND NOW WE SEE HOW OGAMI WILL LOOK AT THAT 6-PIN DISCARD...!
WELL IT WENT WELL THOUGH, DIDN'T IT? TEN WON THAT GAMBLE...
WITH ONE LIKE THAT... IF HE'D DEALT IN, IT WOULD HAVE EXPLODED RIGHT IN HIS FACE... HE WAS A HAIRSBREADTH AWAY FROM IT...
HEH HEH...
IT JUST BARELY SKIMMED THROUGH...
PHEW...
GOOD THING IT PASSED...
OR IS HE THE REAL DEAL...?
WILL OGAMI'S FACADE BE STRIPPED AWAY...!?
A WAY OF PLAYING THAT TESTS PEOPLE...
THE 6-PIN IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD AND STRONG TILE TO PLAY HERE

HE DRAWS HATSU ...!
OGAMI'S HAND
.....
TEN'S DISCARDS

.....
HE WENT AROUND HIM...!
Ooo
NEXT TURN
THIS HAN-CHAN... IS THE FIRST TIME WE'VE SEEN OGAMI ON THE RUN...!
WHAT HE DID JUST NOW WASN'T PUTTING IT INTO HIS HAND TO USE. HE GOT A TILE HE DIDN'T NEED, BUT HE DIDN'T GET RID OF IT...
Ooo


HAKU:
A TILE NOBODY HAS PLAYED YET
HE MIGHT HAVE DISCARDED THE HAKU AND HATSU
HAD THE PRESENCE OF MIND TO GIVE UP ON HIMSELF THAT HE'D SHOWED AT THE BEGINNING
AT THIS TIME IF OGAMI
FROM LOOKING AT TEN'S STRONG DISCARDS, IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE.
OGAMI SUCCUMBED TO THE DEMON LIVING INSIDE HIS OWN HEART...
BUT IN THE END
EVEN 1000 POINTS LOOKS LIKE A YAKUMAN
FOR EXAMPLE TO THOSE THAT ARE SCARED
HE CAN'T SHAKE OFF THE VISION OF DAI-SUU-GEN
EVEN THOUGH HE KNOWS IT'S A SLIM CHANCE
MAHJONG IS A GAME OF ILLUSIONS
.....

IN A HEART THAT TRIES TO MAINTAIN ITS OWN ADVANTAGE .....
THE DEMON, SECURITY ...!

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CHAPTER 56
THE LOGICAL CHOICE LEFT

TEN WAS REVIVED!
AFTER PICKING UP A 1900-POINT WIN FROM OGAMI
SOUTH 3RD ROUND, DEALER'S THIRD ROUND
THE LAST ROUND WITH HIMSELF AS DEALER.
AND DROVE AHEAD TO.....
HE EASILY KICKED ASIDE THE SOUTH 3RD ROUND WITH OGAMI AS DEALER
6TH TURN ...!

TSUMO...!
ざわ
ON ONLY THE 6TH TURN HE WON WITH CHUN, HON-ITSU
.....
NOW THE DIFFERENCE OF 49400 POINTS THAT HAD BEEN BETWEEN HIM AND NANGOU...
WAS 29200-
HE BROUGHT IT UP THAT FAR...!

HE WAS CATCHING UP!

IT FEELS LIKE A DIFFERENCE OF 28000 POINTS IS STILL A FAIR BIT BUT—
THIS FAR, I STILL DON'T KNOW
AS DEALER, TEN COULD STILL MAKE A COMEBACK IF HE CAN TSUMO TWICE FOR MANGAN!
HEH HEH...
ざわ
ざわ..

PON...!
AND THEN IN THE LAST ROUND, SECOND ROUND AS DEALER...
NANGOU'S BACK WAY OFF IN THE DISTANCE...
HE CAN FINALLY MAKE A GRAB FOR...
AFTER GETTING THIS FAR, NANGOU HAS TO MOVE TO TAKE THE WIN...!
EVEN THOUGH HE HASN'T BUDGED UNTIL NOW...
HERE WE GO...
HEH HEH...
NANGOU MOVED...!

SORRY
PROOF THAT HE'S FEELING A LOT OF PRESSURE FROM TEN
TAKING A WIND TILE THIS EARLY, ON THE 3RD TURN IS
OH
CLUNK
CH'—!
IF I CAN DRAW THAT 2-PIN THAT FELL OVER JUST THEN
I'LL BE IN AN IDEAL TENPAI BUT—
IT'S TOO BAD. THE DRAW ORDER IS ONE PLACE OFF—
WASHIO'S DRAW
AS IT IS NOW, WASHIO WILL DRAW IT—
NANGOU'S HAND

HUH...?
AND WHEN I CALL, THE TURN ORDER WILL CHANGE AND THE 2-PIN FROM BEFORE WILL GO TO ME ON MY NEXT TURN...!
NANGOU'S DRAW
IF I DO, IT'S A CLOSED WAIT FOR THE 2-PIN...
I COULD CALL ON THAT 6-PIN...!
THIS WOULD EVENTUALLY BECOME THE GREATEST MISTAKE IN THIS HAN-CHAN.
AT FIRST GLANCE, IT LOOKED LIKE CALLING CHII ON THE 6-PIN WAS BRINGING VICTORY TOWARDS HIMSELF BUT...
WITH THAT CALL NANGOU WAS IN A CLOSED MIDDLE WAIT.
CHII!
ALRIGHT..!
CHII
PON

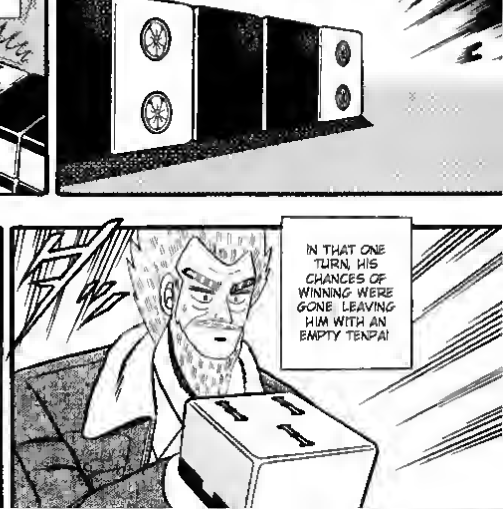
NANGOU EXPOSED HIS OWN HAND!!!
BY RUSHING TO WIN
PRESENTLY... WHEN NANGOU, WHO WAS IN THE LEAD, CALLED WHEN HE WOULDN'T WANT TO NARROW DOWN HIS HAND'S CHANCES
AND CALLED ON A DOUBLE-SIDED SET OF TILES, IT WAS 100% CERTAIN HE WAS IN TENPAI
WHICH MEANT... THAT THE 2-PIN SEEN EARLIER WAS SUSPICIOUS
LIKELY TENPAI WAITING ON THE 2-PIN...?
BECAUSE FOUR OF THE 4-PIN CAN BE SEEN ON THE TABLE
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE IT'S A CLOSED MIDDLE WAIT WITH 1-PIN AND 3-PIN
BOTH TEN AND WASHIO
FIGURED ALL THIS OUT IN AN INSTANT

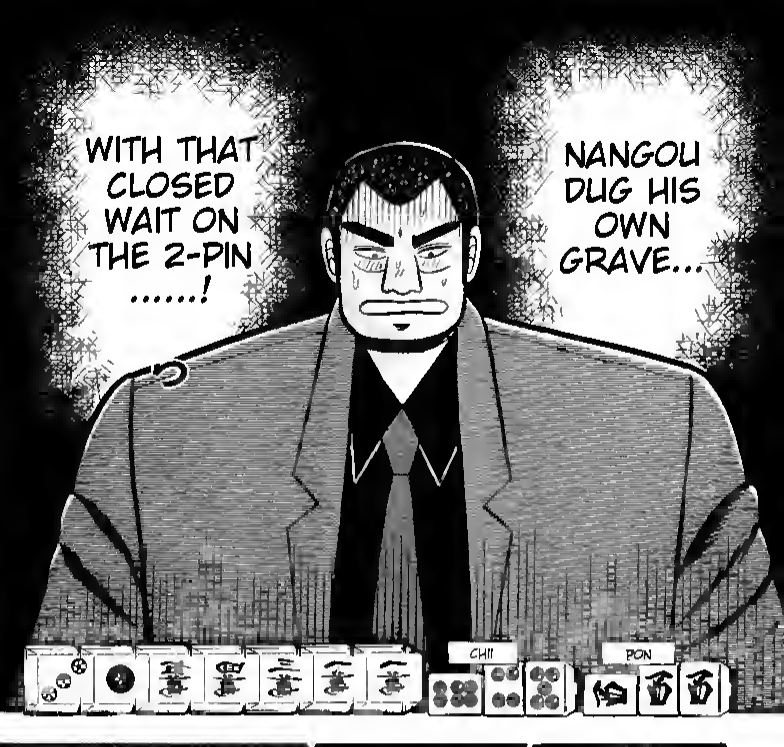
COME ON...!
...THIS AREA?...
SO THAT HE WON'T DRAW THE 2-PIN
WE'LL HAVE TO CHANGE THE DRAW ORDER AGAIN
TEN FORCEFULLY CALLED KAN ON THE DORA, HAKU.
KAN!
URGH...
.....
IN THE END, THE 2-PIN WENT TO WHO IT WAS SUPPOSED TO ORIGINALLY, WASHIO.....
WITH THIS IMPROVISED CO-OPERATIVE PLAY BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM
カミ

KAN!
チャッ..
AND THEN

THE 2-PIN WAIT THAT NANGOU HAD BEEN PLANNING TO WIN FROM IN THE NEXT TURN

THE 2-PIN WAS GONE..


IN THAT ONE TURN, HIS CHANCES OF WINNING WERE GONE. LEAVING HIM WITH AN EMPTY TENPAI


WITH THAT CLOSED WAIT ON THE 2-PIN .....!
NANGOU DUG HIS OWN GRAVE...
CHI!
PON

I DON'T NEED THEM NOW, BUT I CAN'T DISCARD THEM... THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE THEY'RE WAITING FOR THEM TO COME OUT...

THESE GUYS FIGURED OUT THAT THERE'S A 1-PIN AND 3-PIN IN MY HAND.

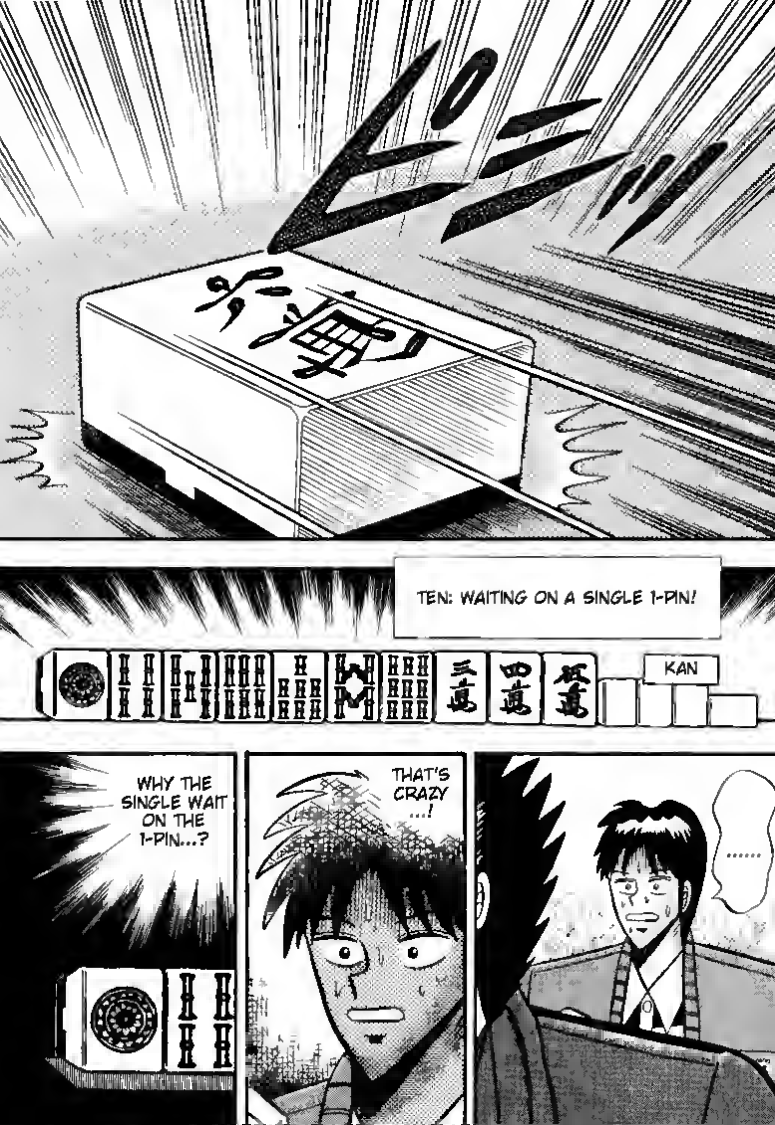
GHR...
...

IS HE GOING TO DISCARD IT THIS ROUND? .....
THAT NANGOU GUY HAS THAT 1-PIN STASHED AWAY IN HIS HAND.....
HEH HEH
8TH TURN: TEN
KAN
GOT IT ...!
IT'LL BE A LOT FASTER TO WIN WITH THAN A SINGLE WAIT ON THE 1-PIN.
THIS IS AN IDEAL 11-SHAN-TEN FOR A THREE-SIDED WAIT...
HE CAN GET RID OF IT NOW...
RATHER THAN WAITING FOR THE 1-PIN TO COME FROM NANGOU
KAN

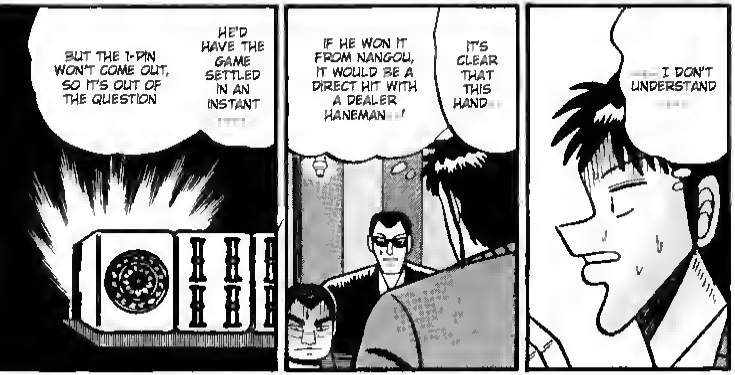
HE KEPT THE 1-PIN ...!
HUH...?
KAN
さわ
さわ..
AIMLESSLY DISCARDING MANZU.....!
HE'S CLEARLY GIVEN UP ON WINNING
IT'S REALLY NOT A GOOD TIME TO FIGHT IT OUT WITH NANGOU
OGAMI'S HON-ITSU IS GIVING HIM SOME COVER
WHY, TEN WHY DID YOU KEEP THE 1-PIN—?

CHII!
WHATEVER COMES UP, HE'S SET ON NOT GIVING UP THAT 1-PIN...
TO PUT PRESSURE ON TEN.
A LAST-DITCH ATTEMPT
OGAMI CALLED FOR A SECOND GROUP OF THREE
TEN, ON THE 10TH TURN
BUT
TENPAI...!
KAN

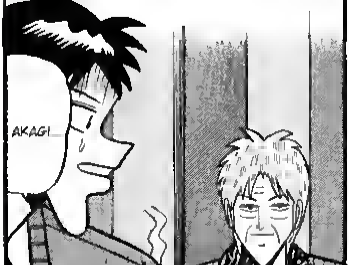
HE'S GOT IT...!
KAN
TEN...!
GO FOR THE 3-6-MAN WAIT HERE .....!
THE 1-PIN WON'T COME OUT .....!

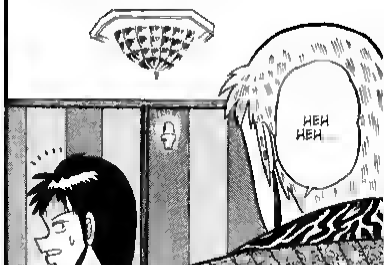

TEN: WAITING ON A SINGLE 1-PIN!
KAN
WHY THE SINGLE WAIT ON THE 1-PIN...?
THAT'S CRAZY ...!
.....

ざわ…
ざわ…


I DON'T UNDERSTAND
IT'S CLEAR THAT THIS HAND
IF HE WON IT FROM NANGOU, IT WOULD BE A DIRECT HIT WITH A DEALER HANEMAN...!
HE'D HAVE THE GAME SETTLED IN AN INSTANT
BUT THE 1-PIN WON'T COME OUT, SO IT'S OUT OF THE QUESTION

HE MUST HAVE DECIDED OGAMI'S BLUFFING BUT... IF THERE'S EVEN 1% OF DANGER FOLLOWING A MANZU DISCARD...
SO WHY DISCARD THE 6-MAN.....? THE 1-PIN WOULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH MORE SAFE...!
WHAT ARE YOU THINKING, TEN...!

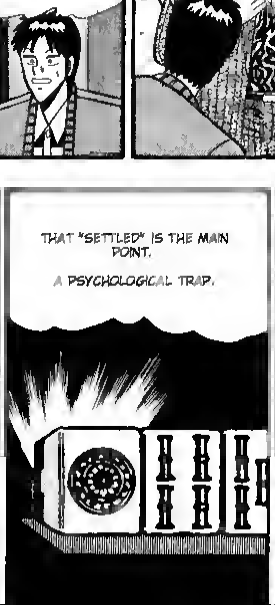

AKAGI


HEH HEH...

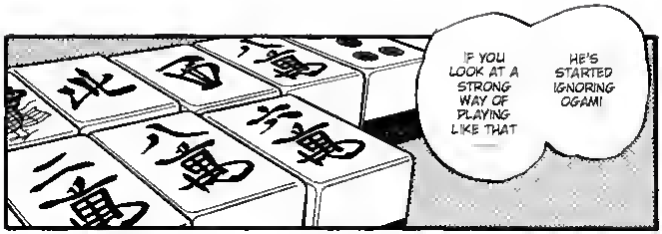
HEH HEH HEH...
BUT IT'S ALREADY SETTLED THAT THE 1-PIN ISN'T GOING TO COME OUT, ISN'T IT...?

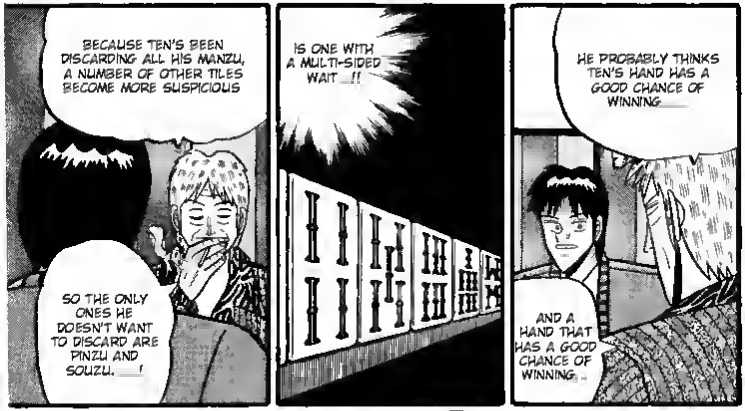
YEAH, WELL...
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU CAN'T SEE WHY HE TOOK SOMETHING OTHER THAN THE EXTENDED WAIT ON MIDDLE TILES, HIRO...

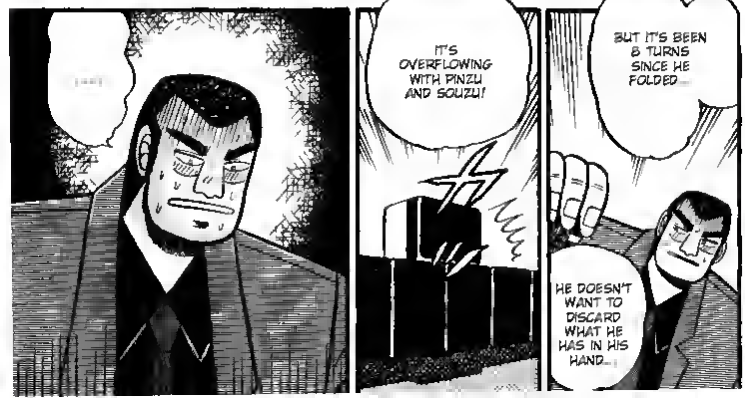
THINK ABOUT IT FROM WHERE NANGOU'S SITTING.....


THAT "SETTLED" IS THE MAIN POINT.
A PSYCHOLOGICAL TRAP.

HIRO...


IF YOU LOOK AT A STRONG WAY OF PLAYING LIKE THAT
HE'S STARTED IGNORING OGAMI


BECAUSE TEN'S BEEN DISCARDING ALL HIS MANZU, A NUMBER OF OTHER TILES BECOME MORE SUSPICIOUS
SO THE ONLY ONES HE DOESN'T WANT TO DISCARD ARE PINZU AND SOUZU.....!
IS ONE WITH A MULTI-SIDED WAIT...!!
HE PROBABLY THINKS TEN'S HAND HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING.....
AND A HAND THAT HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF WINNING...


IT'S OVERFLOWING WITH PINZU AND SOUZU!
BUT IT'S BEEN 8 TURNS SINCE HE FOLDED...
HE DOESN'T WANT TO DISCARD WHAT HE HAS IN HIS HAND...

NANGOU'S HAND...!
CHII
PON
THE LOGICAL CHOICE LEFT IS THE 1-PIN...!
.....
IT SHOULD BE AN EXTREMELY SLIM CHANCE THAT HE'LL WIN OFF IT...!
WHEN I WANT TO KEEP HIM FROM WINNING, WOULD TEN REALLY WAIT ON THIS 1-PIN THAT HE KNOWS HE'LL HAVE NO CHANCE AT GETTING...?
BECAUSE I CAN SEE TWO OF THEM ON THE TABLE, THE ONLY SHAPE COULD BE IN A SINGLE WAIT.....!
SO FIRST OFF, HE WON'T DISCARD IN THAT AREA.
IF YOU'RE RELYING ON LOGIC, THE MOST DANGEROUS TILE HERE IS A MIDDLE TILE THAT'S NOT MANZU
THEY LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO RELY ON INTUITION
TRY TO RELY ON LOGIC...
PEOPLE THAT ARE JUST BARELY HANGING ON
...
HE CAN'T DISCARD A DORA EITHER.
AND HE CAN'T DISCARD A TILE THAT IS FAIRLY OR HASN'T BEEN PLAYED YET
.....
AT THAT POINT, WHAT LOGICAL CHOICE IS LEFT TO HIM? ...WHICH MEANS ...

IT WON'T BE THIS ONE...!
SO INSTEAD...
...YEAH
TURNED AROUND THE HUGE POINT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND NANGOU
AND NOW
HE EVADED THE ASSASSIN, OGAMI
HEH HEH

MADE A COME-BACK WITH A DEALER HANE-MAN...!
TEN ...!

THE LEADER OF EAST, TEN TAKASHI!
THE SEVENTH MAN TO PROCEED TO THE SHOWDOWN IS